THE CATHOLIC'S WORK IN THE WORLD

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THE CATHOLIC'S WORK IN THE WORLD

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THE CATHOLIC'S WORK IN THE WORLD

A PRACTICAL SOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF TO-DAY

BY

REV. JOSEPH HUSSLEIN, S.J.

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THE CATHOLIC'S WORK IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

THREE WORLD CONQUESTS FOR CHRIST

Pagan Rome, the Barbarian Hordes, Modern Materialism

THE future historian, looking back over the course of the past centuries of Christianity, will be able to discern three great epochs. They will stand out like giant landmarks, each momentous in its importance for the destinies of the human race. The first will be the era of the Cæsars and the triumph of the early Church. The second will be the period of the barbarian invasions of civilized Europe and the re-conquest of the world for Christ. The third we may regard as the age of materialism following upon the "Reformation."

All three epochs are characterized alike by vast world conquests. Two of these periods

have passed into history and can now be studied in their completeness. The third remains filled with vast possibilities for us.

The *first of the three world conquests* began with the triumph of the Roman arms. We behold in the pagan Rome of old the very sublimation of purely material power. Beneath its art and literature, its glory and refinement, what leprosy and cruel corruption! "Without affection, without fidelity, without mercy," was the Apostle's characterization of that pagan civilization, delivered up in its pride to a reprobate sense and doing without remorse the things worthy of death. It was all a triumph of "the world," of the threefold concupiscence of fallen man. Yet God's dispensation made of it the preparation for the spread of His own kingdom.

The ends of the earth had been placed under tribute to Rome that Christianity might follow in the path of the marching armies. The roads built by the Roman legionaries had been laid straight and smooth for the feet of the apostles. Little did the haughty Cæsars deem, as they looked upon the Christian victims staining the sands of the arena with their blood, that from those precious drops should spring the conquering army of the Cross of Christ.

Splendid as was the first great triumph of the Church, and productive of all the wonders of God's grace in the hearts of men, yet it only delayed but did not avert the fall of that ancient civilization into which the vices of paganism had eaten deeply. The sanctity of the Church indeed had never failed through all these centuries and saints without number shone like stars in her firmament; but the earth in general required a renewal and the hour was at hand.

The *second world conquest now followed.* The deluge of barbarism swept like a tidal wave over Europe. Rough-shod the savage hordes rode onward, regardless of ancient splendors, of the glory that once was Rome and of the monuments that marked her conquests. New "lords of the earth," they had come to take their place at the banquet table of the world. The Church was once again to pass through new ordeals; but the Providence of God was not wanting. Amid the wreck of civilization she now alone survived, sublime in the beauty and strength of her unwaning youth, girding herself for the task of a second spiritual conquest and the social reconstruction of the world in Christ.

Wild and wilful children of nature, untamed and untutored, slaves to a cruel superstition,

filled with greed of pillage and with the lust of battle in their blood, the savage hordes that now repeopled Europe called indeed for all the Church's firmness and patience no less than for all her motherly love. To subdue their fierceness, to cultivate their minds by learning, to train their hearts to gentleness, and form in them the likeness of the meek and humble Christ was indeed a long and weary task. Yet never did the Church fail or falter. A second time she conquered the conquerors of the world.

Can the wonder be thrice repeated? Nothing surely is impossible with God. The third period of world conquest is unrolled before us. It is not the struggle of embattled nations, though the round of the earth should ring with the forging of arms and the clamor of fighting millions. It is a far greater world war, waged for no less a purpose than the domination of all the instruments of human power and influence to use them against Christ and His Church in the service of that world which the Scriptures describe for us as the inveterate enemy of the children of God.

By royal decree and vote of parliament, in press and school and university, on the platform and the stage, in the home and in the workshop that conflict has been incessantly carried on. Often Christianity was not even at-

tacked. It sufficed to overlook Christ. The rest would follow. It did follow. Materialism became the new idol, the darkest of all forms of superstition and the most opposed to the reason of man. Paganism had won its third great victory.

Not over the Church was that victory won, but over schools, over governments, over the hearts of millions of men.

Once more amid the universal desolation one power alone remained uncompromising, untouched, and uncontaminated by the spirit of the world. It was the same Church which of old resisted the pagan Cæsars, and which in later centuries stood sublime above the deluge of the wild barbarian hordes, the Church which Christ had founded upon Peter with the promise that the gates of Hell should not prevail against her. Though some of her children might fail or falter, though heresies might lift their head against her, yet she herself should remain forever without spot or wrinkle, neither in need of reformation nor in danger of destruction, for the Word of God can not prove vain. To her was promised His Spirit and the abiding presence of Christ Himself to the end of ages, to the consummation of time.

Prepared for by the Reformation, out of which it arose, materialism long ago pro-

claimed its conquest of the world. Like the victories of the Cæsars and later like the resistless march of the legions of Thor, that triumph of materialism has only served to prove still more clearly the divine origin of the one, true Catholic Church, whose unbroken line of Pontiffs, beginning with Peter, stretches on through the ages and shall continue to the end of time.

She has now the same power to conquer the world for Christ which she possessed in the days of the apostles and in the ages of the barbarian invasions. It depends upon us to aid in advancing her banners, not for a political supremacy or a martial triumph, but for the spiritual conquest of the world.

That conquest is not to be accomplished in a day. It was not accomplished over the pagan pride of the Roman Emperors until every resource of obloquy and persecution had been put forth by them in vain. So, too, the total regeneration in spirit and truth of the wild hordes that overran Europe was the labor not of a decade of years or of a single generation, but of long centuries of persevering effort. Victory came through work, and struggle, and tears, and the blood of martyrs.

We can not forecast the future. One thing we know: the "Great Advance" has sounded,

the call to renew all things in Christ. Singly and unitedly we must devote to this task the best of our energies, rejoicing in hope, looking forward in work and prayer to the third great spiritual conquest of the world.

In that great conquest, as in the first achieved by Christianity, a conspicuous and most important part must be played by the Catholic laity, by the men and women living in the world yet belonging to Christ, filled with the grace and light and strength of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER II

ONWARD FOR THE KING

Testing Our Loyalty. The Mission

More than forty-five millions of men are said to have responded to the call of their various countries during the first three years of the world war. They marched forth, with courage in their hearts and song upon their lips, to danger, hardship, and to death. They slept in the snow of icy trenches and watched beneath the blaze of torrid suns. They scoffed at wounds and dashed with fearless bravery through hail of bullets and of shells. They fell by the hundreds and the thousands and their bodies were burned in undistinguishable heaps of slain, or buried in the long furrows of the war beneath the waving mounds of nameless graves.

Whatever was the right or the injustice of the cause for which each fought and died, no one will doubt their courage and their fortitude.

The valor displayed at the front was matched

by the sacrifices brought at home. From sums that seemed stupendous at the outset of the war, the cost of waging it continued to increase, until it reached to almost fabulous amounts. Yet statesmen voted to endorse the mighty budgets laid before them in the parliaments of the world. Rich and poor gave of their substance and offered their loans. Wives and mothers sent forth their dear ones and with anxious, eager hearts awaited the tardy news from distant battlefields.

All this and more were men and women willing to do and bear. Nor were Catholics to be surpassed in devotion to their country's cause. Nowhere is patriotism inscribed more deeply and imprinted more indelibly than in the heart of the children of the Church.

Yet as we consider the scenes of heroism and self-sacrifice enacted in the great world war, the question forces itself upon us: How does our loyalty to the cause of Christ, the promotion of His kingdom upon earth, compare with this lavish generosity of patriotic devotion? Have we shown the same eagerness to participate in the vast spiritual conflict which He came to wage for the conquest of the world?

Far be it from us to belittle the spirit of patriotism. It is a noble sentiment to which we all pledge ourselves, heart and soul, for the

very love of Christ and in obedience to His holy will. When founded upon religion it becomes sublime. For that very reason we have chosen it as a model of the loyalty we are to display in the service of God and the zeal we are to show in His campaign.

We are sworn soldiers of Christ. We have been received through Baptism into His great army. We have been strengthened by Confirmation to fight the brave fight. We have been royally provisioned for the great struggle by His own most precious body and blood given us in the Holy Eucharist. We are no mere units lost amid embattled millions, but every hair upon our head is numbered by Him who loves us as His very children. What then have we done to signalize ourselves in the sight of Christ Our Leader? When we come to stand before Him on the day of judgment, when the angel trumpet sounds the last long reveille and His standard flashes in the sky, shall we have ought to show in our credit that can win for us the cross of honor in His service?

Who can measure what even a single million of Catholic men and women could accomplish were they to devote themselves to their sacred task of promoting God's kingdom upon earth with the same devotion shown at the front and at home by the men and women of warring

nations in the sacrifice of money, time, labor, and even life and limb itself!

Among the mighty means of infusing into the hearts of men the spirit of devotion to the cause of Christ the mission must be mentioned as the most direct and popular.

It comes with the power of the eternal truths that it proclaims and the divine strength of the sacraments that it administers to renew all things in Christ Jesus. It quickens the pulse, and thrills the heart, and revives the spiritual life of the entire parish. It points to high purposes and prompts to noble resolutions. It brings new courage and vigor to grapple with the world, the flesh and the devil.

It is a crusade against sin and wickedness in every form, a battle royal to extend God's kingdom in the souls of men.

It gives joy to the angels in heaven over the sinner doing penance, and adds new strength to the militant Church upon earth in the legions of men and women whom it enlists for her defense.

It lifts on high the standard of the cross and sounds in bugle tones the rally that gathers around that banner of their Lord and Saviour, not merely the devoted souls of earnest Christians, but summons to the battle-front the slacker, the straggler, and deserter.

Everywhere it fans into new flames the fire which Christ came to cast upon the earth. This is its great task which it is nobly accomplishing. To bring therefore to the parish mission every man, woman, and child whom our influence can reach is in itself an apostolate of the highest merit and the greatest fruitfulness. All for the greater glory of God.

CHAPTER III

OUR LEADER

Napoleon, King Louis, Christ Our Captain

THERE is a picture by Meissonier on which the artist is said to have labored for ten years. The name under which it is known is "1807."

It represents Napoleon seated upon his steed, in the midst of his mounted staff. In the foreground of the picture, and slightly beneath him, the Imperial Guard sweeps past on madly dashing chargers, a blaze of colors and a whirl of fiercest action. The bronzed and flushed faces of the veteran warriors are lighted with a glow of enthusiasm as they wave their swords and wildly shout their brave salute.

But silent, resolute, imperturbable, sits "the man of destiny."

It is a picture that thrills the beholder though he should look upon it for the hundredth time. All the patriotic hopes and aspirations of the men, all their loyalty and self-

devotion, all their trust and pride and confidence in their successful leader, are here concentrated into a single moment and impressed upon their glowing faces as they fling their "Hail Napoleon!" fearlessly into the teeth of death.

In that instant France itself is in their minds identified with that little figure, sitting motionless and outwardly unmoved, accepting as a wonted and expected tribute that fierce and solemn greeting.

Such is the height of devotion to a purely human leader. Many a great king and mighty general has thus reviewed his stalwart troops as they marched by to victory or death. Few perhaps have received such unstinted loyalty and service as Napoleon from the soldiers under his command.

Yet what was Napoleon to them in comparison with what Christ, our Leader, is to us? What had Napoleon done for them in comparison with what Christ, our King, has done for us? What cause had Napoleon to propose in comparison with the sublime mission of Christ, the Saviour of mankind?

What are we willing, then, to do for Christ: the infinite God, become a babe for us and laid in a manger; the Creator of the universe made man that He might suffer, toil, and spend

Himself for love of us, in hardship, obloquy, and ceaseless labor, watching for us and praying for us long into the lonely vigils of the night, yielding Himself up for us in order that He might die for our soul's salvation in agony upon the cross?

How different the scene when we turn from Him to the earthly kings and leaders of the embattled nations! It is the requirement of scientific warfare that they should view safely from afar the mighty struggle of the great contending armies, where the fighting thousands become indistinguishable to the eye, while friend and foe are blent in the storming of the bloody trenches or the taking of the armored forts. They are, of necessity, housed within the camp, while underneath the wintry sky the untented soldiers lie in the foremost battle lines.

There is no fault to find with this. It is the modern way in which battles must be fought. The welfare of the State and the safety of the armies demand that those who rule and direct the countless human units should not themselves be exposed to needless peril, lest all might end in general confusion and defeat.

Yet not such was the condition chosen for Himself by Christ, our King and Leader.

He first bore in His own Person the brunt

of all the hardships and the dangers before inviting us to follow Him. He not merely imperilled His own life, but freely laid it down for us, paying our ransom even with the last drop of His precious blood. He now asks of us no sacrifice which He has not offered Himself. In our labors, our apostolate, our yielding up of worldly goods for His cause and for His Church He has everywhere given us the supreme example. We are only to follow in His footsteps. Was ever a king and leader such as He?

What was there truly lovable in the person of Napoleon? His treatment of the Sovereign Pontiff and the Church sadly reflects upon the selfish ambition of the man. But even when we turn from him to that great glory of France, the kingly St. Louis, when we behold this royal leader laboring in the trenches with his soldiers and fighting for the cause of his Holy Faith against the Moslem hosts, we still see in him only an imperfect image of that Divine Leader to whom our loyalty is pledged.

Who so great, so strong, so beautiful, so regal, so humble, so heroic and unselfish as the King we follow! What, then, shall prevent us from giving Him all the service of our love and devotion, generously dedicating ourselves to the extension of His kingdom upon earth?

On no proud charger is He mounted, but lifted up for us upon the cross. On no wide field of battle, loud with musketry and cannon, does He hold review, but in the silent tabernacle where He awaits our coming. Daily we may receive Him in the Holy Eucharist. We are not mere neglected units in His service, but for each of us was His own life yielded up. We are not mere indistinguishable atoms lost among the passing millions of humanity, but upon each one His divine eye rests with eager love and longing. Shall we then be satisfied with giving Him less earnest devotion, less generous and heroic service than the nameless thousands fighting for an earthly monarch, we, who are God's children by adoption; we, who are the brothers of the King?

CHAPTER IV

"THE BANNERS OF THE KING ADVANCE"

Signalizing Ourselves in Christ's Campaign

SERVICE, says a scientific writer, is an essential of life. Nothing lives, whether among plants or animals or men, which must not render it. The parasite alone might seem to be excepted, yet even this form of life is made to serve an intelligent end.

Plants serve the needs of the irrational animal creation, and both serve the needs of man. The flower produces its seed, and the bird brings food for its young. Service is compulsory in the plant; it is instinctive in the lower forms of animal life; it is voluntary and joyous in the highest types of men and women. The higher and nobler and more unselfish that service is, the worthier and more perfect is likewise the creature that renders it. What more inspiring form of service than the death of Christ upon the cross for the glory of His Eternal Father and the salvation of mankind!

There are countless causes to which men and women devote themselves, often with the most heroic perseverance. Yet there is only one service that is truly worthy of them and that is the cause in which every Catholic must be enlisted, the cause of Christ. There is nothing so great, nothing so comprehensive, nothing so deserving of our whole heart's devotion. St. Ignatius has briefly expressed it in these few words, which in his most characteristic manner he has placed upon the lips of Christ our Leader:

"My will is to conquer the whole world, and all enemies, and thus to enter into the glory of My Father."

Here is a program beyond which human ambition cannot reach. It means no less than to make our own the purpose for which Christ Himself lived: God's glory and the salvation of souls. It implies the establishment of God's kingdom within our own souls, and thence, by word and deed, by prayer and example, by alms and service, the extension of Christ's kingdom upon earth, the propagation of His Holy Church.

"Whoever desires to come with Me," He calls to us, "must labor with Me, in order that following Me in pain, he may likewise follow Me in glory."

Who that has "the use of judgment and reason," asks St. Ignatius in the spirit of true chivalry, can refuse to offer his whole self for labor in this great cause of Christ? Who but the craven could hold back and seek to excuse himself! God's service does not interfere with the fulfilment of all a man's duties to his own, but perfects his performance of them, while it opens new vistas of glorious endeavor. It alone can make life truly worth the living and the world truly the better for our having lived in it for however brief a space.

Who will wear the white feather and hold back from Christ's campaign?

Service means sacrifice. "That a rose may live something must die." But in the spiritual life our losses are all our gain, though they profit the world no less and glorify God. If we now labor with Christ for the extension of His kingdom in the hearts of men and over the face of the earth, if we follow Him in pain, we shall likewise follow Him in glory. Where He is, there too shall we be at His side.

Christ had come to conquer the world, to form a great world kingdom which was to embrace all nations and continue to the end of time, the Catholic Church. For this did He appoint a vicegerent who was to govern it in His absence, when He Himself should return

to the Father. To Peter He solemnly gave the keys of His kingdom, that they might be handed down by him to his successors, the Sovereign Pontiffs, to the end of time. The words of Christ were clear and no one could presume to question this supremacy: "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xvi, 19).

Through His apostles and their successors was this kingdom, this Church which Christ had built upon Peter, to be constantly preserved and defended and extended. But we all are likewise called to share in this great undertaking, each according to his position, his means, his possibilities. To each of us the sublime invitation is extended. We all are to take part in this world campaign. There is no conscription, for all Christ's soldiers are volunteers, who serve for love of Him.

Who then would wear the white feather? Who that bears the name of Christian and Catholic would hesitate to volunteer? Who that has "the use of judgment and reason" would not gladly enroll himself in such a service and labor in it with his whole strength?"

Granted that we have all enlisted and will do our manful part in the work for Christ and the conquest of the world for Him, yet we must remember that there are many degrees in

this service. Its shining honors are distributed in the world to come, but the nearness in which we stand to our King is measured here upon earth by the extent of our love, our labors and our self-denial in His cause.

To use again the words of the chivalrous Loyola, there are "those who wish to signalize themselves in every kind of service of their Eternal King and Universal Lord." Are we among their number?

The question, therefore, should not be: Who would wear the white feather? who would refuse to follow Him by laboring devotedly for the extension of His kingdom upon earth, His Holy Church? but who will signalize himself the most in the service of this Eternal King? His plans of campaign we now know; they have been unrolled before our eyes: "My will is to conquer the whole world, and all enemies, and thus to enter into the glory of My Father." The glory He has won He would share with us in proportion to our labor and our love for Him.

The banners of the King advance, "Who follows in His train"?

CHAPTER V

RAINBOW-CHASING

Hunting the Rainbow's End of Pleasures, Riches, Honors

DIVES was "a success," as the world conceives of this. Riches and honors were his, legions of friends and retinues of servants, and all that the heart of man can desire in the goods of earth. He was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. He strutted bravely on the stage of life for his brief space, and all the world applauded. For the rest, Scripture tells us of his fate.

Such is earthly prosperity and fame, without the love of God. There are many brothers of Dives and many who wish to be enrolled in their relationship. In his own worldly set Dives was most probably esteemed as an "excellent fellow." Had he lived in our day he might possibly have contributed liberally to the most advanced propaganda for the "uplift of humanity."

In the eyes of Heaven success is rated very

differently. So vulgar a person in the sight of the world as the beggar Lazarus, lying full of sores at the gates of Dives, was a true success as the angels saw it. Yet even the very servants of the rich man did not deign to notice him. The dogs alone showed any friendliness, following the instincts of their nature. Gladly would Lazarus have been satisfied with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, had they been given him. But the hour of God's reckoning is never very far.

"And it came to pass," the Scripture says, "that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died: and he was buried in hell." Such is the contrast between the judgment of the Almighty and the judgment of man.

Nothing is more important in our day, or in any day, than a clear notion of what constitutes success. It is the one purpose of life. All men wish to succeed, and in turn wish their children to succeed after them. It is right that they should have this ambition. The desire for success should ever be the supreme thought with all of us, but it must be the success of which Heaven approves and which can stand the test of the judgment of God.

In what, then, does success consist? What is true success as distinguished from the Dives

kind which not a few Catholics seem to ambition? I refer in particular to those parents who send their children to non-Catholic schools to "advance" them in life. There are countless kinds of false success, but there is only one kind of true success, *and this consists in achieving the end for which God created us.*

The perfection of every object is measured by the manner in which it answers the purpose for which it was made. It was this simple principle of right reason which St. Ignatius pointed out as fundamental for all right living and the basis of all true success.

The perfection of the knife is to be found in the keenness of its edge, for its purpose is to be used in cutting. The perfection of the rose is the beauty of its petals and the sweetness of its perfume. Man was made "to know, love and serve God, and so to save his soul." He may be rich as Dives or poor as Lazarus, but neither his riches nor his poverty constitute his success. They may at the most be means to help him to achieve it. His success itself consists in the perfection with which he serves God.

Amid the thousand and one false ideals which the world holds out to us, it becomes necessary constantly to keep in mind, and before the minds of those dependent upon us for

instruction and assistance, the one and only true meaning of success. It is is the sole compass that can guide us safely to the harbor of God's eternal joy and peace.

In the quest for this success alone can we find true happiness. All other quests are but a fool's endeavor, a search after the pot of gold at the rainbow's end. We can smile at the child that seeks this fabled treasure and finds the rainbow scattered before it has even reached the place where the arch had seemed to touch the earth. But it makes the wise weep to see a man of ripened intelligence and experience pursuing the same phantom at the rainbow's end.

Who of us has not done his rainbow-chasing? It was delightful in the child. It is madness in the adult. Every search for what was not meant eventually to help us in the accomplishment of our one true destiny was for us but the insanity of rainbow-chasing. Dives was only one of a vast number. The rainbow of riches and honors and pleasures vanished and left him at the end of his life's journey with empty hand and tarnished heart and mind perverted.

Rainbow-chasing is the world's favorite occupation and indeed its exclusive employment. All the more need therefore for us as Cath-

olics to cry a halt. But we must first quit the chase ourselves, and we do so by making the glory of God and the salvation of our soul the one purpose of our lives.

We need not be poor as Lazarus to accomplish this. We must support ourselves and our families, and this is the will of God, provided we do all for love of Him. Beyond this there is still a world of good that can be accomplished through the means we honestly acquire or the personal help we can give to the cause of God in every form of its endless appeals.

The height of success for us is not only with God's grace, to save our own souls, but likewise to help, with the same grace, in the salvation and perfection of countless other souls whom through God's infinite goodness we can aid by our prayers, our intentions, our words and works and alms. This is the ambition which every Catholic man and woman should earnestly pursue as the true object of life.

Here, therefore, is success as God conceives of it, not visionary gold at the rainbow's end, mere worldly wealth or honor or social prestige; but the fullness of the riches of life everlasting. Here are treasures without end, glory supreme and the social success, not of a fleeting day, but of an eternity spent with the

angels of God, with Mary the Mother of Our King, with that King Himself in all the splendors of His royalty whose friends we ambition to be, the nearest and dearest to His Sacred Heart.

Have we, too, been chasing rainbows in the past? If so, we shall do well to lift up our eyes to Him who is the Sun of Truth. There shall we find, in an infinite measure, all the good that our hearts can seek and long for. They can never rest, as St. Augustine tells us, until they rest in Him.

CHAPTER VI

DOUBLING THE CAPITAL ENTRUSTED TO US

Trading with the Talents God Has Given Us

It is well to hold up for our admiration the work accomplished by the Church in the past, under the guidance and by the strength of the Holy Spirit of God. It is well likewise to make known for our consolation the great things achieved by her in the present, for the arm of God is not shortened and His Spirit is still poured forth into the hearts of men. But the pertinent question which the reader's conscience should ask of him is: "What have we done in the past to bring about the extension of God's kingdom upon earth?"

Are we doubling in God's service the talents which He gave us, or are we hiding them away? They are the capital entrusted to us, which in reality belongs to Him alone. Are we trading with them to His advantage, or are we regarding only our own petty selves?

Seeking thus to gain our lives, we shall lose them.

Here is a fruitful subject for self-examination. And the question to which it should inevitably lead is even more important: "What are we going to do in the future?"

There is no possible means of ever knowing in full, on this side of the grave, the actual success we have had in promoting the salvation of souls and the extension of the kingdom of God, unless He Himself should reveal it to us. It is moreover especially meritorious to labor for His glory without knowing the success we are achieving. But one thing we can know, and that is the effort we have made to bring souls to Christ. On this point therefore we can profitably examine ourselves, and here we can form our resolutions, relying entirely upon the help of God.

In laboring for souls our strength lies precisely in our weakness. It enables us to confess our helplessness and nothingness. Humility is the first condition that we may be fit instruments for the hand of God to use us in carrying out His great designs. So we do not find it hard to give to Him alone the glory, cheerfully acknowledging that when we have done everything we are only unprofitable servants. It is our humility on the one hand, and

the intensity of our love on the other, which are the two mighty factors in laboring for souls.

God indeed may turn to the highest account even our simplest actions when performed in this spirit. "Pick up a pin from the motive of love," says the Little Flower in her own delightful way, "and you may thereby convert a soul."

The good that may be due to our prayers, our sacrifices, our daily or frequent communions, and to the purity of our intention in everything we do, beginning with a fervent morning offering, can probably never be realized by us here upon earth. "You tell me you wish to see the fruit of your efforts," says the Little Flower again. "That is precisely what Jesus would hide from you." It is sufficient for us to glory, with the Apostle, in our infirmities.

But there are likewise more direct efforts to be made, where we enter into personal contact with souls. Here, perchance, our prayers, combined with our words and example and the literature judiciously distributed or recommended by us may visibly produce their result by the grace of God. We cannot be too zealous for God's glory, but neither must we neglect to make use of all the skill and tact

which are necessary in that most delicate of operations which deals with human souls. Have we done all we could for the souls of those with whom we have personally come into contact? Are the eyes of Christ perhaps looking reproachfully upon us? If so, we will hasten to make amends in the spirit of joy and confidence, trusting in His goodness always.

How effective is the apostolate of the Catholic press alone! Have we used it to best advantage for souls? An intelligent, zealous Catholic weekly paper is a weekly missionary. A monthly magazine, inflamed with eagerness for the cause of Christ, comes as an apostle to speak to the soul. A good book, chosen with a view of the particular needs of an individual, may appeal to him as a message from the Spirit of God, as a new precursor of Christ to prepare the way for Him.

There is again the apostolate of the Catholic missions in foreign lands. Who knows what mighty works may be wrought by our alms, accompanied by our prayers? Think of the many millions of infants baptized through the aid of the Holy Childhood alone. The five dollars spent for the purchasing of a heathen child may be to us no such very great matter, but we cannot measure the results God may achieve through their means. The work

God accomplishes through us is not to be measured by our talents, our wealth or our physical strength.

We might thus continue to speak of a hundred and one apostolates, many of which are to be mentioned in these pages. They are all for souls, for souls, for souls. The Lord does not ask of us that we undertake them all, but some part at least we should have in them. Our hands must not be empty when the Master calls.

May we never be of the number of those who hide their talent in a napkin and bury it away in the ground.

CHAPTER VII

A LION IN THE WAY

Sloth and Timidity in God's Service

THERE is a striking figure in the Book of Proverbs which at once impresses itself upon the memory: "The slothful man saith: There is a lion in the way." The same thought is expressed in another form by the sacred writer: "The slothful man saith: There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the midst of the streets" (Prov. xxii: 13; xxvi: 13).

The lion hunt is a favorite subject in the Assyrian bas-reliefs. It was a royal pastime for monarchs, when driven in their speeding chariots or guarded by their men-at-arms. We behold the dread king of beasts, infuriated with pain as the arrows pierce his body, leaping at his tormentors, bounding into the air to drag them from their car or even biting in blinded rage at the wheel of the stayed chariot to which he clings.

In the Scripture too the lion finds a notable

mention. It is one of David's deeds of heroism to have caught by the throat and strangled the lion that attacked his father's flock. So too God gave strength to Samson to tear the young lion he encountered at the vineyards of Thamnatha: "And the spirit of the Lord came upon Samson, and he tore the lion as he would have torn a kid to pieces." And lo, what followed! When after some days he returned by that way, "he went aside to see the carcass of the lion, and behold there was a swarm of bees in the mouth of the lion and a honeycomb" (Judges xiv: 6–8).

To meet a lion in the way was therefore no slight adventure. Satan himself is compared to a roaring lion prowling about and seeking whom he may devour. Yet for all that it remains true that the slothful man is only seeking for the most likely excuse when he gives as a reason for sitting idly at his own fireside, that "There is a lion in the way, and a lioness in the roads."

It is doubtless a fact that we Catholics have often to meet the lion in all reality under the shape of bigotry and persecution which he now assumes. We are neither Davids nor Samsons to meet him single-handed, and we must therefore strongly unite and properly prepare ourselves for this danger.

But there is a timid and over-politic class of Catholics who hear the crouching lion in every rustle of the dry leaves. They dare not come into prominence as defenders of their faith for fear of consequences, such as the loss of social prestige, the weakening of political influence, or the lessening of temporal profits and advantages. They are therefore doing nothing for Christ and His Church where they might and should do so much. They are God's servants failing to perform the duties of their stewardship. In vain would they quiet their consciences with the idle excuse: "There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the midst of the streets."

But we are not here concerned with others. The moral applies to us. Why, we ask ourselves, have not *we* done more?

There is on every hand a dearth of men and means to carry on the great works for God. Money is needed; service is needed; vocations are needed. The question to be answered by each one is: "Am I prepared faithfully to do my own part?" If not, what is the lion in the way?

My first duty is the upbuilding of God's kingdom within my own soul, the conscientious striving to attain that degree of perfection God has destined for me, the accomplishment

of His will in my regard. The lion in my way has been the dread of sacrifice and of the effort required to overcome my spiritual sloth. Once we have firmly set our foot upon the path of progress, the tawny terror of our own imagination will immediately vanish. When we come to meet the real lion we can confide in the strength of God to overcome him. The humble man, who trusts in God alone and does his manly part, is never vanquished; he relies far more upon the arms of constant prayer than upon his mere material weapons, yet he does not for that reason disdain to use the latter to the very best advantage. It was "the spirit of the Lord" that came upon Samson and he tore the lion as he would have torn a kid.

That conquest of ourselves once fairly begun, we can more confidently hope to conquer other souls for God, and we shall daily extend His kingdom on earth by prayer and good example and apostolic efforts of a thousand kinds. Numbers alone are not sufficient for the Church. What is needed is an army of zealous and efficient workers. There are slothful Catholics enough who are a reproach to their religion. God's cause calls for men and women who are willing to put forth their own best strength rather than merely wait for others to do the work.

"It is the duty of priests and bishops," they exclaim where a labor for God is to be done, as if it were not the layman's task as well to look after the interests of Christ and His Church.

We must therefore be honest with ourselves and not give to our consciences the slothful man's excuse: "There is a lion in the way, and a lioness in the road."

Granted that the struggle may at times be hard, granted that we shall not always escape unscathed, yet the victory in the end is certain and the reward is great exceedingly. There may be a spiritual triumph even in material failure. In the mouth of the slain lion we shall find the sweetness of that honeycomb which Samson tasted and newly strengthened we shall go upon our way like to him, rejoicing that "he had taken the honey from the body of the lion."

CHAPTER VIII

THE TWO CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

Labor and Prayer that God May Grant the Victory

"We must do battle before God gives the victory."

These words of Blessed Joan of Arc expresses the Catholic attitude in all things that pertain to the spiritual life or the conquest of souls. The interests of Christ and of His Church cannot be safeguarded by us unless we are willing to exert ourselves. God indeed might send a legion of angels to defend them, but such is not the wonted course of His divine providence.

Apathy towards the cause of Christ, cowardice or compromise, and every form of indifference must be looked upon as treasonable. Our enemies are ever active. The Gates of Hell are ever pouring forth their armies against the citadel of God. They can not prevail against the Church herself, for she is di-

vinely preserved and Christ's promise can never be made void in her regard; but they can succeed against individuals, against communities and even against entire nations in so far as bigotry and persecution may for a time at least seem to be triumphant.

Life is a warfare, and every Christian must be a crusader. There are enemies within and enemies without. It is not sufficient to defend ourselves against them. We must wage an offensive warfare. To stand upon the defensive only, as so many Catholics do, is to give to the enemy all the advantage.

Our warfare is spiritual. Our weapons are not of the flesh. Our standard is the cross, and our Leader is Christ. Not a mere defensive warfare was the battle that He came to wage against error and sin. His Church was to be a spiritual, conquering power. To break through the entrenchments of the foe; to storm the citadels of error is our task, and not merely to dig ourselves into the earth and wait in trembling the skillfully planned onset. We have Christ with us. We have His very Self for our daily Food. His arm supports us and we need not fear.

But outward activity is only one condition of success. Like St. Ignatius we must labor as if everything depended upon ourselves alone, and

pray as if we looked to God alone for the accomplishment of all we undertake.

Many worthy enterprises have been wrecked and many noble lives have gone to ruin because this condition of prayer was overlooked.

Men engaged in the service of God and of their neighbor are at times too much engrossed in their external occupations to give due consideration to the interior life, the life of prayer. Their attention is absorbed in solving the difficulties that confront them, or they are elated over the success which has fallen to their share, or they are eagerly pressing on to develop the advantage they have gained. They have not entirely forgotten the necessity of prayer, nor do they fail to have recourse to it, but they do not perhaps realize fully the great necessity of a life of prayer.

With two wings given them, they are striving to lift themselves up into the clouds with a single pinion, while the other is at least partially lame and inactive through their own negligence.

Whether laboring for ourselves or for others we must rely upon the divine strength far more than upon our own; or rather, as the saints have more rightly expressed it, we must place all our reliance upon the help of God alone,

while not neglecting anything that lies within our power.

That our resolutions may not be blighted in the bud and may never come to fruitage, they should be accompanied, implicitly or formally, by that other resolution of relying on the power of prayer to be faithful to the end. We remember the protestations of St. Peter and his willingness to follow his divine Master even unto death, but we remember, too, how disgracefully his valor was soon after put to rout by the tongue of a servant girl. He had relied too greatly upon himself.

Our Lord told His apostles not only to watch, but likewise to pray; for the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Our labor must be prayerful, and our prayer filled with apostolic zeal to win the world for Christ. So our labors will never interfere with prayer, and prayer will never conflict with our labors.

To renew all things in Christ, to hasten the coming of His kingdom over all the earth is the ambition of every Catholic who would be worthy of his high vocation. The humblest duties of our calling may be made mightily subservient to this end if performed in the spirit of prayer and apostleship, if offered for the intentions of the Heart of Christ, in union

with Him, through the Heart of Mary. Our days should all begin with an earnest morning offering, and in the spirit of that offering we should live.

What lives more humble and lowly than those of Joseph and Mary, and what duties more simple and homely than theirs? Yet what lives more apostolic, what duties rendered more sublime by the motives that inspired them?

We began with the noble words of Blessed Joan of Arc. In tending her sheep upon the pastures of her native land she performed her mission no less truly than when called by Heaven she led forth the armies of her country against a foreign foe.

There is a mission for each of us, more grand and mighty than we can well imagine. In the annals of God its least details will be eternally recorded, though the world should never hear of it. That we may achieve true success we must therefore strive to be faithful to the two conditions which alone can assure it for us: labor and prayer according to the will of God.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT OF THE SAMPLE?

The Apostolate of Good Example

A MODERN business method, never out of date, is the distribution of the sample package. To test before he buys is the natural desire of every purchaser.

Samples are intended to introduce a new product into the market or to give wider popularity to one already favorably known. What would we think of a sample inferior to the article which it represents? It would show a lamentable lack of business instinct on the part of the firm distributing it.

Seeking after samples is not confined to the commercial life. All popular movements or institutions are judged more or less by their members and representatives. The same holds true of religion. Every Catholic becomes, for his own immediate neighbors or associates, a sample by which men judge the Faith which he professes, as a cause is judged by its effects.

Hence, therefore, the significance of the

apostolate of good example. Hence likewise the responsibility which our divine religion brings with it. We must express in our lives something at least of that virtue and perfection which the Church may rightly demand of us, and which as members of Christ's mystic body should be the characteristic of every Catholic.

How do I represent the Church? This is the pertinent question which we must ask ourselves, particularly at the present critical moment when so much can be gained or lost for the cause of Christ. Is my life a fair sample by which men can rightly judge the influence of the Church's doctrine by beholding its application in my words and actions? Is it a fair sample by which they can estimate the fruit of her divinely instituted sacraments? Is their effectiveness evident in my own instance?

Catholics, unfortunately, at times present in their lives a contradiction of the sublime teachings of their faith. They are then lying samples by which men falsely judge the influence of the Church and so deny the purity of her doctrine and the divinity of her institution. They are obstacles that impede the progress of the Gospel. They offset the good which others might accomplish by their works and their words.

Catholics again can be found who are indifferent in their religion. They too are deceptive samples. Judged by them, the Church would seem no better, if no worse, than countless other institutions which are not from God. They are lukewarm in the service of Christ and consequently are of those whom Our Lord says He will vomit forth from His mouth, because they are neither warm nor cold. What effect then can they have upon their fellow men?

There are still others who are not entirely indifferent and lukewarm, but who are too cowardly to manifest themselves as true Catholics before the world. They are zero Catholics. They do not weigh in the scale. They do not dare to represent the Church and the principles for which it stands. How long will they remain a mere cipher? When forced to take sides, who knows whether they will be found faithful? They may yet prove a scandal.

There are finally those who, to a greater or less extent, truly and worthily represent in their words and actions and in all their lives the Church of which they are members. They are the real samples in whom men may see, as a cause is beheld in its effect, something at least of the truth and beauty of the one and

only Church which Christ established. Their lives are the test by which may be gaged in some measure the sublime influence of Catholic doctrine and the power of the sacraments. They are being transformed into an ever closer likeness of Christ. That likeness, imprinted upon their souls and shining forth in their outward demeanor and their intercourse with men, cannot fail to impress the world as the example of the early Christians once impressed it and prepared it for conversion. They are carrying on in truth that glorious apostolate of good example which is the first condition for the conversion of the world to Christ.

Knowing that of ourselves we are nothing and can do nothing, we yet should be able to say in the spirit of humility: "Be ye imitators of me as I also am an imitator of Christ; for it is His doctrine that I represent in my life and it is in the strength of His sacraments that I walk."

Thus shall we make our own the apostolate of good example. Our words will be the mightier because our works are true. We may now hope worthily to fulfill that sublime mission with which Christ entrusts us as His faithful followers:

"You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid.

"Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house."

"So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

CHAPTER X

"PREPAREDNESS"

Preparing to Bring About the Coming of God's Kingdom

"PREPAREDNESS!"

This was the word which the imagination of men saw lettered in flame across the smoke clouds of the great world war, which they heard syllabled in the crash of shell and shrapnel and in the booming of the mighty guns.

It was written as a warning over the wastes of desolation that had once been beautiful cities. It was traced in the blue of the skies by the flight of aeroplanes and Zeppelins. It was thundered across the ocean waves from the death-spurting fire of the iron battleships. It was cabled underneath the surface of the seas by unseen fleets that pass along the whale paths of the deep and work destruction upon their way.

"Preparedness!" It was the ready answer that men gave to their suspicions, their fears,

or their surmises. It was a word which all might use, since all believed in a measure of preparedness, for all agreed that the nations of the world must stand prepared to face the great world issues.

Men who would bitterly have opposed each other had a definition been sought of the extent of preparedness required could march enthusiastically, shoulder to shoulder, in the same prodigious preparedness parades. The bands could strike up their patriotic airs, the flags wave proudly overhead, the wide ranks of the marchers pass along the blazing streets or through the drenching rain, and not one word of discord was to be heard. "Preparedness" was the watchword of the hour on which all could unite.

But there is a spiritual preparedness of even far more tremendous moment for us all. Over nineteen hundred years ago a new era of preparedness was ushered into the world, and an event was announced for which all the centuries that preceded were indeed to have been one single period of preparedness.

"And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the desert of Judea. And saying: Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by Isaias the prophet saying: A

voice of one crying in the desert. PREPARE ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths."

Had the nations of Europe remembered that cry; had they once more taken heed of the warning given to the Jews of old; had they prepared more earnestly for the coming of Christ into their countries, their cities, their homes, their hearts—then there had been less need of those other lavish preparations that first drained the wealth of the nations and then exhausted the blood of their best manhood.

To prepare the way of the Lord is the first preparedness needed even for the material safety and welfare of the land. It does not exclude any other preparedness that is within the limits of right reason, but without this we can only go the way of other nations that have perished before us in their pride and self-sufficiency.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord" in the the legislatures, in the schools, in the households of the land! It is vain to build up armies and launch navies, if we do not count upon the God of battles and the Lord of hosts.

Nations must make all preparations in men and equipment that may at any period be required, but they must insist, at all periods,

upon that higher preparedness which alone can make their land truly great because truly Christian. To help in bringing this about is the first duty we owe to our country.

As citizens, Catholics have the same common interests, together with the same wide diversity of opinion, in questions of national importance as any other class of men who earnestly seek the real welfare of the land to which they have pledged their allegiance. But as members of the Church they can have no diversity of views upon the necessity of that higher preparedness which is to bring about the coming of the kingdom of God, which is to usher in for all mankind the only true peace and joy and salvation in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Its equipment consists in no earthly armament, but in the power of united prayer for the world's conversion, in the study and distribution of instructive and apostolic literature, in the making of missions and retreats and in all the countless ways of laboring for the kingdom of Christ, that He alone may reign within our souls, within our homes, within our cities, within our nation and over all the world.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths."

CHAPTER XI

MAKING MEN SEE RED

Learning Zeal from the Socialist Agitator

To make men see red is to make them see the world as socialists see it. It is to give them Marxian glasses and persuade them that all things are as now they behold them: red, red, and only red—not the warm red of Christian charity, but the harsh and glaring red of revolution.

Not only economics, capital and labor, but religion and history, woman, the home and human society in all its multitudinous phases are suddenly illumined by that new delusive light of modern radicalism. Heaven and hell themselves are colored by it, though the true Marxian believes only in a hell of capitalism and a socialist heaven upon earth.

There is for such a man no longer any question of sane remedies for existing evils. Discrimination is unknown to him. Exaggeration and distortion become the order of the day. How else could he continue to see red? There is for him no need of attention to the

endless variety of shades and colors in the social and economic problems of our day as in the multi-colored scenes of field and sea and mountain. There is one remedy for every ill; one joy for every sorrow; one cure for every pain: the socialist co-operative commonwealth. To reckon with the efforts of original sin is not his concern.

For the ultra-radical socialist his social creed becomes the rule and measure of morality as of economics. Whatever opposes socialism is evil, whatever advances it is good. Even the men least affected by this malady color their religion and the Ten Commandments with the hue of their socialistic creed. It is indeed a cheerless world for them; far other than the Christians' vale of tears with the rainbow of an eternal hope forever playing over it.

The socialist is not content, as was said, to wrap himself up in his own delusion. He must convince the world of color-blindness because his own vision is affected. One enthusiastic promoter of socialism may thus infect a whole multitude with at least the germs of radicalism, leading to religious indifferentism and final loss of faith on the part of Catholics. He thinks, reads, reasons, talks and discusses socialism. On the car, in the street or in the shop, wherever he goes, and wherever he is, he

has one thought uppermost in his mind, one topic ever ready upon his tongue.

His literature he carries with him. He leaves it exposed in conspicuous places. He thrusts it upon his friends. He distributes it far and wide at his own cost and by his own exertion. It is a literature frankly hostile to the Catholic Church, covertly or openly subversive of her morality, ultimately destructive of labor's truest and highest aspirations, as pointed out by the Vicar of Christ. It is radical. It is red.

Now there is something admirable in all this, if we prescind from the dreadful harm that socialism has done to the souls of men and the thousands of human beings it has in all probability helped to sink into eternal perdition. There is something admirable in the pure display of natural energy we here behold. There is something more than admirable, there is something entirely imitable on our part. Our Lord Himself has told us that the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. He himself has taught us to look to them for an example, and to do in the service of God what they are doing in their own interests, in the service of the world or of Satan.

We too, as Catholics, have a vision of our

own. We too see the world in a light in which others fail to behold it. We too have a mission to make them see as we do. But there is between us and socialists a vast difference. We have the vision of truth, and we know it, because God Himself has told us and we believe His word. The socialist has no evidence that his hopes can ever come true, and the promise of Marx is not infallible, for it has already been proved false a thousand times.

The just man liveth by faith. It is the light of faith by which he perceives all things. It is in this light alone in which he measures and values them. The vision we possess does not rob the earth of its multitudinous beauty, but enhances with a new splendor all that is pure, all that is true, all that is good, all that is holy. It does not produce monotony, but infinite variety, because it is the radiance of truth, while the glare of socialism is a false and broken light, the ominous foreboding of social and spiritual ruin.

Our vision, the supernatural light of faith, can not, it is true, be communicated to others by any skill or persuasiveness or power of our own. It is a blessing dependent upon the grace of God, who alone can bestow it as a supreme favor upon any human soul. But we can co-operate with Him. Our efforts can

prepare the soul for that grace. We can constantly labor and pray for the conversion of the world. Both these means must be ceaselessly used by us. The energy which the socialist agitator puts forth in the cause of a mere delusion is as nothing compared with the zeal which urged on a St. Paul to win souls for Christ. It was the Eucharistic Bread, constantly received, the living indwelling of the Living Christ which made apostles of the early Christians, and the same supernatural means must be applied by us to enkindle the fire of our zeal.

We are not because of this to neglect the social question. We know that we have the only solution of it, the renovating of the world in Christ, the renewal of the charity of Christ in the hearts of men.

Beyond this there is no purely material cure-all, as socialists imagine. The remedies to be applied must vary in nature and degree with the evils that afflict mankind. But we know too that all these evils have their root in sin, original or personal, and that therefore we can do no nobler social work than through prayer and labor and zeal to bring back the world to that Church from which it has wandered like the hapless Prodigal and fallen ever since into endless miseries.

What, then, are we to do in a practical way? The outline of our lesson has already been given us in the zeal, sadly misapplied though it is, of the socialist here described, the enthusiast among socialists, the genuine Marxian: for the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.

CHAPTER XII

"WIN-MY-CHUM WEEK"

Winning Our Friends for God and His Church

"WIN-MY-CHUM week" is a method of personal work adopted by a Protestant league for the extension of church membership. The term is sufficiently expressive in itself. The friends to be won over are carefully selected, are persistently invited and urged to attend the well-prepared meeting, and are there received and welcomed with the heartiest cordiality. A chill of coldness, even for an instant, would be fatal. A hint of professionalism would be the fly in the ointment.

When all due provisions have been made the important moment at last arrives, the pressing home of the decision, the focussing of the entire matter. This in particular is the task of the personal friend. If the "chum" has been successfully won over, the work has only begun. He must now be kept, he must be interested in the church work and the church organizations. His friend, above all, must be

the pilot who directs and safely conducts him on his new spiritual voyage.

Catholics have often a longer task before them between their first effort to effect a conversion and the final entrance of their friend into the fold. Yet no week of their lives should pass that is not for them a "win-my-chum" week in the truest sense.

To win souls for Christ is the vocation of every Catholic. It is a sad perversion to believe that the laity are not called to participate actively in the apostolic mission of the Church, to convert the world. The clergy and hierarchy indeed are specially consecrated to guide and teach Christ's flock with the divine authority committed to them, and to administer the sacraments of His Holy Church. But the apostolate among the masses must in large measure be carried on by the Catholic men and women who themselves must daily mingle with the world. They are to be the truth-bearers, Christ-bearers, to their generation. Their words, their works, their prayers, are everywhere to be potent influence for the extension of the Faith. There is no one who will not be able to accomplish something towards this great end; for to each soul God has given its own special means and power to help in the conversion and renewal of the world.

It is not among non-Catholics only that this work is to be carried on, or among those who have for long years neglected the practice of their holy Faith. There are among our acquaintances lukewarm Catholics to be brought back to a fuller realization of their duties, careless Catholics to be stimulated to a greater fervor and intensity in their religious life, fervent Catholics to be encouraged in their efforts and still more confirmed in their sublime apostolate of prayer, example and personal service for the salvation of souls. The most intimate "chums" of the Catholic will be Catholics themselves; but he loves all men as his neighbors, as bearing the image of God, as destined for eternal salvation.

Every man is our neighbor. The loyal Catholic makes his own, in each morning's offering, the intentions of the Sacred Heart, whose love burns for the conversion of the entire world. He contributes to the missions afar and the work of Church extension in his own land; and his prayer arises for the coming of God's kingdom at home and abroad. Yet he is of necessity particularly urgent in laboring for the spiritual welfare of those who come most closely into contact with him, who perhaps depend upon him, over whom his influence, to some degree at least, extends. All

these are really meant to be included in that "win-my-chum" motto which has been considered here.

It should sting us to the quick if, on reading the efforts Protestants are making amid the confusion of their ever-changing beliefs, we find that we ourselves, with the splendid certainty of our Faith, have been satisfied with mere generalities, have done nothing definite, nothing systematic, nothing which really suggests forethought and sacrifice to win for Christ the souls even of those who stand nearest to us. And yet our whole life is meant to be an incessant, prayerful, earnest and undismayed campaign for souls, a win-my-neighbor campaign for the glory of God and the extension of His Church upon earth. To this we must pledge ourselves as the soldiers of Christ.

It is true there are no "win-my-chum" meetings specially organized by us, although every mission is truly an occasion for winning many a soul that should be led back again by us to the feet of its divine Saviour. The Church herself, however, is a standing invitation. To her priests we may bring our friends on any day when we ourselves have done our share to prepare them; have made them acquainted with the beauty of the truth or have led them back to it again; have placed in their hands the

literature most needed in their peculiar circumstances, and have prayed, as we shall still continue to pray, that Mary may plead with us at the throne of God's mercy to win their souls for Christ and obtain for them the grace of faith.

CHAPTER XIII

SOMETHING DEFINITE TO DO

Finding a Definite Apostolate for the Laity

A Protestant clergyman, speaking of the work of the laity in the church, closed his address by inviting every one of the men who wanted something to do to meet him at once in the League room. Almost every man present responded to the challenge. That afternoon automobiles, filled with men, were motoring through the country. They were making house-to-house calls, and invitations were extended to the neighbors on every hand to attend the church service. Others of the men, in teams of two, went out upon a round of systematic visits, carefully planned, with the same object in view.

Needless to say, that night the church was packed with men. It was an audience such as perhaps had never before been gathered within its walls. A similar plan was followed with equal success in regard to the women.

Vague general invitations to do something for Christ, to sacrifice time and means and energy in apostolic endeavor, are not enough. Men look for something definite to do, for a personal appeal. They must be given their place in the ranks or at the head of the columns, if a decisive spiritual victory is to be won. Prudent generalship requires this. An army fighting at haphazard must soon be hopelessly outclassed. Our Divine Lord sent His disciples two by two upon their missions. Later the apostles were to divide the earth among themselves to conquer it for Christ. When difficulties arose in regard to the daily ministrations of charity they called together the disciples and said:

"It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom ye may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

This saying, we are told, was liked by all the multitude, and seven men were chosen for this definite task.

There are many men and women in every parish willing, and often eager, to enter upon apostolic work, if only the way is pointed out

to them and they are given something definite to do. There is no reason to doubt that on special occasions and for special purposes the entire body of men or women throughout the parish can be set to work, if they are personally approached and a definite task is set them. It would be unworthy of us to think that our Catholic laity would not do what Protestants have done so willingly.

Protestant ideas and methods may not appeal to us, and often rightly so; but we have sufficient initiative to plan our own campaigns to win our parish district, to win our city, to win our country, to win the world for Christ. The apostolate of prayer must be united to the apostolate of action. Teach our Catholic laity to pray for this purpose and then teach them likewise to act. Give them something definite to do. Enlist every man and woman in the service, as far as this is possible.

"Each parish," it has been wisely said, "could use its Sodality for the purpose of making a census. Each member could be assigned a certain district, and a thorough canvass of each such district should be made. Those having charge of the census in each district should make a return to their pastor, giving the conditions, religious, social, moral and otherwise, that they discover in each family.

Their efforts should not be confined simply to those belonging to the parish but should extend to every Catholic, irrespective of race or nationality, living within the parish lines, for a great deal of the leakage occurs among those of foreign birth. When the respective reports are turned in to the pastor and compiled, he will be surprised at the appalling conditions disclosed; and if he be a priest of the proper apostolic zeal, he will not rest until they are alleviated."

Here therefore is the mission of the zealous pastor. His own physical powers are by nature exceedingly limited for the great work that is to be done. But the general does not fight the whole battle. He is a poor general indeed should he attempt such an impossibility. His success consists in communicating his own spirit to others, in showing them his own willingness to make sacrifices for his cause, and in directing them to carry out what he has skillfully and laboriously planned. Victory implies long and careful preparation and serious forethought, no less than ardor and valor and disregard for self.

But a general does not direct personally the entire army. It is well for him to know each man by name and keep them all beneath his eye and show to every soldier his personal re-

gard and deep appreciation for his deeds. But his staff, too, shares in the responsibility and the initiative, and this extends to the subordinates, down to the last in command. So the mind and will of one become the mind and will of all, yet each takes his proper part, in action and initiative, from general to soldier.

Every Catholic is a potential apostle. To develop this spirit of apostolate is the great need of the Church in our day. The Catholic who takes his religion seriously cannot fail to share this desire to do something for Christ. But to achieve the most perfect results we must be organized for this service.

There are countless Catholic societies. Each of these, with the proper direction, with constant personal pressure and appeal, with the definite assignment of work to individual members, could be made a mighty power for good.

What splendid work can thus be accomplished by a thoroughly organized St. Vincent de Paul Society alone, with its multiplicity of Catholic endeavors, with its Ozanam clubs and its catechism classes, with the poor of the entire parish religiously visited and relieved by it in the spirit of Christly charity!

What can not be accomplished by the sections of an ideally conducted Sodality! "Sodalities," says Father Garesché, "are taking up

all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. By means of sections or committees of their members they are making a survey of the parish, organizing parish welfare sections, helping the poor and the sick, distributing Catholic literature, assisting the missions, teaching catechism, looking after friendless boys and girls, promoting sociability among Catholics, aiding the parish schools, and in many other ways acting as a zealous lay auxiliary to their pastors." In one word, they are ready instruments at hand for any and every work that needs to be done within the parish, but has no other definite organization to attend to it.

What wonders can not similarly be accomplished by a militant Holy Name Society, whose individual members have the idea of Catholic service and apostolate constantly brought home to them in a personal way!

Give our Catholic men and our Catholic women something definite to do, and they will do it. From indifferentism, they will be roused into action, and soon the time will come when they in turn will be able to inflame others with their own spirit.

Give them something definite to do, looking beyond personal and mere parish interests to the great work of the Church universal and the conquest of the world for Christ. There

can always be change and variety enough in the vast range of Catholic interests, from familiar parish to distant mission. Catholics must be taught to embrace them all.

The wider the area of light the more intense will be the focus to which the rays converge at any moment. They are all in that instant applied to something definite to do.

CHAPTER XIV

ST. PAUL IN THE AREOPAGUS

Favorably Disposing Non-Catholics

In the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles is given a discourse delivered in the center of ancient Greek culture by the Apostle St. Paul. It contains lessons of special value for that Catholic Apostolate to which we are all called.

The Apostle had come to Athens and found the city given over to idolatry. There was a synagogue in which he met the Jews on the Sabbath; but in the market place he disputed every day with all that were there. Many of his hearers were attracted by the novelty of his doctrine, and they brought him to the Areopagus: "May we know," they asked, "what this new doctrine is thou speakest?"

It was with an entirely pagan people the Apostle had here to deal, with philosophers conceited because of their petty learning, with a generation reared amid the sensuous surroundings of a decadent civilization, with seekers after the excitement of novelties rather than

with men eager to learn the truth. We can not, therefore, fail to see in them the characteristics of the new paganism amid which we ourselves are often cast, a modern phase of the same decadent civilization:—sensuous, conceited, enamored of novelties and eager for every thrill of the latest sensation.

Yet St. Paul did not refuse the invitation held out to him. It was an opportunity of making Christ known. There would be present at least some sincere men who could profit by his words.

Our attention is called at the very first to the fact that he did not begin by pointing out the faults of his hearers, but by referring to that trait of their character which displayed itself in the exceptional veneration they showed to their gods. The Athenians were spoken of as the most religious-minded of the Greeks, although, unfortunately for themselves, they displayed this quality by the great number of gods they worshipped. Among the latter were included many of the divinities of foreign nations. According to the testimony of Xenophon, the Athenians celebrated twice as many feast days of their numerous gods as did the other states.

"Ye men of Athens," St. Paul began, "I perceive that in all things you are too superstí-

tious." This last word has not the same harsh sound in the original as in the English translation, but it calls attention to the zeal they showed in honoring the gods, so much so that they had even erected an altar with the inscription "To the unknown God."

Without in the slightest approving their idolatry, but with the intention of utterly abolishing it; without giving even the hint of a possible compromise, the Apostle nevertheless avoided everything that might be unnecessarily offensive.

"For passing by," he continues, "and seeing your idols, I found an altar also, on which was written: *To the unknown God.* What therefore you worship without knowing it, that I preach to you."

Thus the Apostle had admirably preserved the full dignity of Christian truth. He had yielded no single point and had impressed upon his hearers the fact that in spite of their many gods they did not yet possess the one religion which it was important for them to know. Yet, at the same time he had won their good will and gained their attention for his words. Meekness, but not weakness; consideration, but not compromise, are the conditions of the true Catholic apostolate. This was to be made still more apparent when the time had come for that

full and fearless unfolding of the truth, for which he was now preparing them by the natural means which God places at our disposal.

To be all things to all men that he might win them all for Christ was the motto of St. Paul, as it must be our own. It supposes an earnest and deep desire to do everything in our power for our fellow-men, to lay aside our own private interests and control our personal feelings in order that we may bring them nearer to Christ and His Church. Opportunities for doing spiritual good are constantly offered for us all, aside from the vast apostolates of prayer, good example, and the diffusion of Catholic literature.

A drop of honey will attract more flies than a whole cask of vinegar, was the happy illustration given by the genial St. Francis de Sales, who himself was so successful in the great Catholic work of the apostolate for Christ. Had the Apostle opened his discourse by offending his hearers, he would have ended where he began.

Doubtless there are occasions when men need at once to be warned and aroused. Christ Himself has left us an example in unveiling the hypocrisy of those men of bad faith who had come only to entrap Him in His speech or to gather evidence against Him.

So, too, St. John the Baptist, with his dreadful words of warning, struck sudden fear into the hearts of the Pharisees and Sadducees when he relentlessly laid bare their hypocrisy: "Ye brood of vipers, who hath shewed you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of penance." Only then did he proceed to show to them how vain it would be to place their trust in the mere fact of their descent from Abraham, for nothing could save them except repentance and good works, else they would all be swept away like worthless chaff to burn forever in "unquenchable fire."

Humility on our part and an absolute trust in God are evidently the first conditions for every apostolate. It was the custom of the "Little Flower," Sister Teresa of the Child Jesus, first to turn to our Blessed Lady for help before giving advice to the novices who came to her, and the Lord did not fail to enlighten her to say what was wise and prudent and well-pleasing in His sight. Here is the method we too must follow; but besides imploring the aid of heaven we must, like the Apostle, make use of all rightful natural means that can help us to attain our end most sweetly and most readily.

An inconsiderate word may turn away an inquirer from the truth, an insult may forever de-

stroy our possibility of doing good to a soul in need of our help. Yet neither must we ever under the pretense of prudence yield up one jot or tittle of our Catholic faith.

CHAPTER XV

THE UNKNOWN GOD

Laying a Foundation for Convert-Making

The gruff and dictatorial Samuel Johnson once remarked that men can have no reason to bear with us if we offend them. Surely no natural motive will induce them to observe more than an exterior friendliness at the best.

The first condition therefore to win souls for Christ is to acquire something of His own affability, His meekness and humility of heart. The winsomeness of the Saviour must be reflected in our own lives, it must shine forth in our words no less than in our actions, if we would successfully participate in His work.

But more than the good will of our neighbor is to be gained in order to convince him of the truth. A mutual understanding should first be established by starting from what is familiar or readily accepted by him. Thus the Apostle St. Paul, confronted in the Areopagus by a pagan audience, reminded his hearers of the altar he had seen, dedicated by them to the

"unknown God." What therefore they worshipped without knowing it, he would preach to them.

He even went further, and condescended to quote their own pagan poets in so far as their words confirmed the truth. Speaking of men's duty to seek the one true God, described by him as most near to every one of us, he added the explanation: "For in Him we live, and move, and are; as some also of your own poets said: *For we are also His offspring.*" From this vantage point of mutual understanding he was able to continue his reasoning. For if all mankind was made by God, they could not "suppose the divinity to be like unto gold, or silver, or stone, the drawing of art, and device of man." The Creator can not be inferior to the creature.

Dealing with men who are well disposed and yet without practical acquaintance with the Scriptures, we must evidently first bring them to a better knowledge of that God of whom their conscience tells them, of whom all visible creation is eloquent in its appeal to their reason, who is the First Cause of all things that are made, yet who is unknown to them in that fuller, deeper, richer knowledge derived from revelation and preserved for us within the one true Church.

In so far therefore all creation may still be said to be for them, like that altar St. Paul beheld at Athens, a temple bearing in letters of gold the inscription "To the unknown God."

Though God is not known to them as we have learned to know Him, yet the visible things of creation speak in unmistakable language of the invisible Creator. There can be no lasting excuse for the atheist. It is only the fool who saith in his heart, "There is no God!" In his reason he can not say it. He desires to be free, without accountability, without the haunting fear of judgment after death; and so the desire that there might be no God is expressed by him in the word of folly, that there is no God.

It is the "unknown God," already more or less dimly perceived through the veil of His creation, whom we can make known to those who are willing to heed the lessons of reason and who will not be deaf to the promptings of God's voice that speaks within their hearts. We can tell them why the Scriptures are to be credited. Like the Apostle we can speak to them of that day assigned by God "wherein He will judge the world in equity"; and of Him who is to sit in judgment over all mankind; and of that supreme confirmation given by God Himself to our faith in Christ: "giving faith to

all, by raising him up from the dead." So can we lead up to that one and only Church which Christ has founded upon Peter.

But to those who admit the Scriptures; to those in particular to whom the Messias has already been pointed out as He was to St. John, "Behold the Lamb of God"; to those who are willing to acknowledge in Him the Only-Begotten of the Father, there remains to be shown the unknown Church of God, that Church of which the Scriptures bear the clearest testimony, as creation points to its Maker.

If our faith is to be a reasonable faith, if we would be able to satisfy the different classes of men with whom we are in intercourse, we must prepare ourselves by careful study of the literature intended for that purpose. What use have we hitherto made of Catholic books that can give us sound and practical instruction, of Catholic journals that can teach us the bearings of our faith upon the questions of the day, of a literature that will ground us ever more firmly in the principles of our holy religion?

Are we ready to point out to all, to explain, and prove and render unmistakable to them the unknown Church, as St. Paul pointed out to the Greeks of old the "unknown God," that he might lead them to the still more unknown

Church? It is a knowledge not gained in a day, a knowledge in which we must all our lives seek to render ourselves more perfect, both for our own good and the help of others within or without the Fold.

Here, therefore, is the true Catholic preparedness.

CHAPTER XVI

NO COMPROMISE

No Compromise to be Made in Matters of Faith

We were gathered in the Areopagus and saw the learned philosophers of Greece, the men representing the thought and "progress" of their age, in the world's center of intellectual and artistic culture, following with curiosity the new doctrines expounded to them by St. Paul. His countenance was illumined as he spoke and the fire of zeal burned in his eyes. His eloquence bore them along with irresistible logic.

Here truly was a man different from themselves, a man careless of mere phrase and rhetoric or the vanities of philosophic subtleties, whose thoughts struck home with every word, leveling ancient falsehoods and establishing a divine doctrine that was comforting to men of good will as it was terrible to souls obdurate in sin.

Kindness and considerateness itself, he knew

how to gather out of the complexity of errors that formed the religious beliefs of a pagan world the few suggestions that might help to lead them to the truth. With these facts as the starting points of his argument and teaching he began to unfold the doctrine of the one true God.

St. Paul had made himself all things to all men that he might win them all for Christ. He had begun with preaching the "unknown God" whom the Athenians worshipped without knowing Him, and had quoted from Aratus, their poet. Yet there was one thing St. Paul could not do, one thing that exceeded his authority; and this was to compromise with error. Though it might have seemed kind, it would in reality have been most cruel; though it might have won him personal friends, it would have made him a traitor to God. There could, therefore, be no compromise, no matter how slight or insignificant it might seem.

The utmost charity and zeal for our neighbor's salvation; the gentlest consideration for him, together with the establishment of the best mutual understanding, and finally the absolute exclusion of all compromise even in what may apparently be the least and most negligible of the doctrines of the Catholic Church: these are the three lessons of the Catholic apostolate

taught us by St. Paul, of that apostolate to which we all are called, each according to his degree and possibilities.

We must always remember and deeply impress it upon our heart that there is nothing small or negligible in our faith. Either it is all divine, or nothing is divine. All that Christ teaches us through the Church which He has founded upon Peter we must believe. To teach all nations "to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you" was the instruction given by Christ to His apostles and their successors in that Church with which He promised to remain "even to the consummation of the world." Never, therefore, can she teach even the least doctrine that is not of Christ. Never can she compromise with error.

Gently, but bravely, St. Paul refuted all the ancient myths of his pagan audience. God, he told them, is not to be imagined dwelling in temples made with hands, after the conception of those who believed their divinities to be enclosed within the statues of stone, and of silver, and of gold. There was no different origin for different nations and they were wrong in holding that any human being might be treated with contempt, since in all there was the same human dignity and for all the same common bond of brotherhood. God indeed is merciful,

and "having winked at the times of this ignorance, now declareth unto men, that all should everywhere do penance." For they could not hope to escape the day of judgment.

Compromise, therefore, is a word that must never be spoken by Catholics where there is question of the teachings of the Church of Christ. Yet this does not exclude a certain spiritual prudence such as the Apostle displayed by gradually preparing his hearers, step by step, for the truth which he wished to unfold before them. Only by this process did he finally come to the point which he knew would at once be bitterly debated, the resurrection of the dead.

Here, indeed, he was interrupted in his argument. Some openly laughed at him; others more civilly told him that they would listen to him some other time. There was no more to be accomplished for the present. Yet his work had not been in vain: "But certain men adhering to him, did believe; among whom was also Dionysius, the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

Compromise with those not of the Faith is at all times the deadliest of errors. Here precisely is the danger of religious indifferentism. Here is the danger of socialism. Here is the danger of mixed marriages. Here is the dan-

ger of seeking to keep at all costs the golden opinion of the world and fearing its contempt. Here is the danger of education in non-Catholic schools, no matter how innocent they may seem to be.

Modernism is the baneful blossom of religious compromise and atheism is its fruit. We can not save the souls of others in any such way, but we can readily lose our own.

CHAPTER XVII

A MODERN DALILA

Dangers to Catholics from the Irreligious Press

THERE is a story in the Old Testament with which every Catholic is acquainted and which he is not likely ever to forget.

Samson, a Judge in Israel, had received from the Lord the personal mission of warring upon the Philistines by whom his country was oppressed. He was a Nazarite, sacred to God from his infancy even to his death. The long, flowing hair which distinguished him was the sign of his consecration, the sign of a Nazarite among the Jews. It is not strange, therefore, that Almighty God should have connected with them the extraordinary physical strength He bestowed upon him.

Having recounted the deeds of Samson against the Philistines, the Scripture adds:

"After this he loved a woman who dwelled in the valley of Sorec, and she was called Dalila.

"And the princes of the Philistines came to her, and said: Deceive him, and learn of him

wherein his great strength lieth, and how we may be able to overcome him, to bind and afflict him: which, if thou wilt do, we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver."

We may well enough remember the wiles which were practiced by Dalila; her sensuous lures, her deceptions by which she overcame the Nazarite, and made him disobedient to his God, and finally deprived him of his strength when she had learned wherein its secret lay. So she delivered him weak and helpless into the hands of his enemies, the Philistines. He had justly forfeited the strength which God had given him for high and sacred purposes.

"Then the Philistines seized upon him, and forthwith pulled out his eyes, and led him bound in chains to Gaza, and shutting him up in prison made him grind."

There are many sources of spiritual danger which we might rightly enough compare to this lascivious, heartless, deceptive creature of sin. We need but mention the sensuous theaters, the immoral displays in many of our moving picture shows, the irreligious schools that instill infidelity into the soul of youth, besides robbing it of its virtue.

Under a thousand deceptive forms sin appeals to us and it is needless to strive to enu-

merate them all. In the early ages of Christianity it was not possible for Christians to look about them upon the public streets without casting their eyes upon objects that were lustful or tempted to sin. The Catholic of today is often hardly less exposed and there is need of the same courageous self-restraint and self-denial.

But there is one source of danger in particular which aptly compares with the treacherous Philistine woman. *That modern Dalila is the irreligious press.*

It appeals to Catholics with its skilful seductiveness, with its lascivious immorality and religious falsehood, and with the lure of a hidden paganism to ruin their souls. It comes with its artful representations of moral shamelessness in picture and print, in Sunday supplement, in popular magazine and salacious "best seller." It practises its treacheries by misrepresentation of history, of religion and of current facts that touch upon the interests of Christianity and the Catholic faith. It offers us, under the enticing semblance of science and learning, the entire mess of the world's errors, ancient and modern.

There is no need of referring in particular to a literature which, like that of socialism and radicalism of every kind, is directly condemned

by the Church, and which covertly or openly seeks at all times to discredit her with the world and rob her children of their precious faith. But there is a vast literature besides, apparently more respectable and innocuous, that constantly plies its Dalila trade for the deception, the defilement and the ruin of souls.

Why should Catholics support a press which betrays them into the hands of their enemies? Why should they give their silver or their copper coins—to apply the words of a great prelate—in order that chains may be forged out of them for their own enslavement?

Even the so-called neutral press is often highly dangerous. Why then should Catholics not devote their whole strength to the support of the excellent Catholic press which they possess? Why should their tables not be laden with Catholic literature? Thus will they become imbued with the true Catholic spirit and will be armed against the errors and falsehoods of their day. Thus will they escape the wiles of the modern Dalila, with whom we must shun all intercourse and from whom we must protect our children with the most assiduous care. All dangerous secular literature that is seeking an entrance into our homes and our hearts in order to betray us to our ruin is a Dalila temptation.

Her first object is to beget in us religious indifference. Then the truth is more and more obscured by her. Error follows in its place. Credence is given to the misrepresentations of Catholic interests. The Catholic point of view in the questions of the day, in matters of history and finally even in doctrines of the Church themselves, is lost to sight.

Those who indulge in secular literature, even the most innocent, to the exclusion of the necessary Catholic reading, have set their foot upon her path. How far they will go along in it God only can know. Countless souls have followed it to their eternal ruin.

Like the Nazarite of old, we are dedicated to God, and our consecration to Him took place in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Shall we then yield ourselves up, like a spiritually blinded Samson, to the treacherous wiles of the modern Dalila? Sensuous, heartless, deceptive, she would rob us of our sublime mission in the service of Christ, she would take from us the strength by which we are to destroy the Philistine paganism of our day and spread the kingdom of God upon earth. With her endless enticements, her deceptive teachings, and her shams that pass for learning and for science, she would win our hearts and souls. She would shear us of the strength

we possess in our holy faith, in the grace of God and in the frequent reception of the sacraments of the Church. She would scoffingly deliver us up into the hands of our enemies and to her modern Dagon of godlessness. She would pitilessly have us blinded to the sun of truth and the light of God's Revelation.

CHAPTER XVIII

A DEBBORA OF OUR AGE

Power of an Enlightened Catholic Press

THE comparison between the irreligious press and that false woman through whose wiles Samson, the "Nazarite of God," was betrayed, is only too strikingly justified by the facts of every-day experience. Evil reading, like evil companionship, leads to destruction. It is tempting God.

The neutral press is often hardly less dangerous. The words of Our Lord can here serve us for a warning. He tells us that whosoever is not with Him is against Him; that he who gathereth not with Him, scattereth.

But the same book of Judges which recounts the deceits of the false Dalila, likewise records the history of the noble Debbora, a prophetess who judged the people of God. Of her the Holy Scripture says: "The valiant men ceased and rested in Israel: until Debbora arose, a mother arose in Israel." Her mighty influence and beneficent activity can well be used, by way of comparison, to illustrate the

service of a good press in the cause of Christ.

It is to be feared that little can ever be hoped for from Catholic men and women who are without an effective and widely-spread Catholic literature. Its constant aid and inspiration are necessary to point out to them the hour of danger and the need of action; to encourage them in their daily battle for truth and justice; and to help them in bravely overcoming the difficulties which without such assistance would seem insuperable. "The valiant men ceased, and rested in Israel," will be the verdict of history upon us, if we neglect the development and propagation of a mighty Catholic press. It must constantly instruct and urge us on to action.

These thoughts are perhaps sufficiently familiar, and yet they are too little understood and put into intelligent practice. They were most forcibly expressed by Pope Pius X. His words of warning cannot be repeated too frequently; they contain fundamental truths which can never be staled by repetition:

"Neither the faithful nor the clergy," he said, "make use of the press as they should.

"Sometimes people say that the press is an innovation, and that souls used to be saved without newspapers in former times. They do not bear in mind that in former times the poi-

son of the bad press was not spread everywhere, and that therefore the antidote was not necessary.

"In vain will you build churches, give missions, found schools. All your work will be destroyed, all your efforts rendered fruitless, if you are not able to wield the defensive and offensive weapon of a loyal and sincere Catholic press."

There is little to be added to these words.

If Catholics are too often inactive, one reason is that they are not using as they should the Catholic press.

As Catholics we are not politicians, much less are we revolutionists. We desire only what every right-minded man must concede to be absolutely justified: our full rights as citizens. Yet these we may not forego. Our purpose must ever be not merely to defend truth and justice, wherever they are attacked; but likewise to promote by all good and lawful means the cause of Christ. Every Catholic should regard himself as an apostle. To do the work of an apostle he needs the Catholic press.

Like the army of Sisara gathered against the children of Israel, the enemies of the Church are united for her destruction. "And he gathered together," says the Scripture of the

Chanaanite general, "his nine hundred chariots armed with scythes, and all his army from Haroseth of the Gentiles to the torrent of Cison."

It was Debbora who, at God's will, had aroused her nation to shake off the yoke of these pagan Chanaanites. It was she who had summoned Barac to lead the army of the Lord by divine command.

"If thou wilt come with me," he answered her, "I will go; if thou wilt not come with me, I will not go." She therefore arose and went with him.

"And the Lord struck terror into Sisara, and all his chariots, and all his multitude." His cars of war, armed with their gruesome scythes, were dashed together in the wild confusion, his army was destroyed and he himself leaped from his chariot to flee away on foot, who had come so proudly in his vaunted power.

Of the children of Israel the Scripture adds, that they "grew daily stronger."

The Catholic press does not presume to usurp the teaching authority of the Catholic hierarchy. But its duty is to make that teaching ever more perfectly known to those within and those outside the fold. It is needed day by day to enlighten, encourage and strengthen the faithful. It is needed to support them in

the conflict as their mightiest ally in overcoming ignorance, error, bigotry, and the entire host of enemies embattled against Christ and His Church.

Whatever our resolutions may be, the fact is that with the Catholic press to inspire us we will go down to do battle for the cause of Christ, but without it we will sit supinely and allow ourselves and the interests of God to be trampled under foot. We must not look for God to work miracles while He has given us this natural means to use for our defense and for His service.

With Debbora in our company and the Spirit of God in our hearts we will not fear the foe. Without her, we may readily enough, like the Israelites of old, succumb to the Chanaanite yoke; or like Samson be deceived and blinded by that modern Dalila, the irreligious press.

"You are certainly not aware," Pope Pius X wrote to the hierarchy of Brazil, "of the great power both for edification and for destruction wielded by the daily and periodical papers. Costing a mere trifle, they are within the reach of all, and spread far and wide the opinions with which they are imbued. You yourself see the abuse that is made of them by the evil-minded."

He therefore desires the prelates to see to it that the faithful in their care are provided with excellent Catholic publications. We have many such. But of what avail are they if Catholics are not aroused to the need of acquainting themselves with them and of spreading them to the utmost of their power?

Nor is it sufficient that they are read by devout Catholics alone. They should be brought by them within the reach of their fellow Catholics, and indeed of all others who can profit by them. Here is an apostolate in itself.

"And when Catholic newspapers are published," says Pope Pius X in the letter just quoted, "efforts should be made not to have the reading of them confined to the good alone. They should be given the widest possible circulation and be placed in the hands of all, especially of those whom Christian charity desires to see called back from the poisonous wells of bad papers.

"Thus it will happen that for those who seek the kingdom of God and His justice the art of printing will be made to co-operate unto good."

CHAPTER XIX

THE SPEEDOMETER

Zeal in Promoting Catholic Literature

THE speedometer is the latest device for increasing subscriptions. It has at least been applied successfully in various chapters of an active non-Catholic league. The story told in the "Epworth Herald" may serve as an object lesson for Catholic parishes, societies and leagues. There are countless similar devices that can be used. It is the zeal with which they are carried out that counts.

Four weeks in advance the vice-president of one of the league chapters, to which we shall confine our attention, began his preparation. Two weeks before the important night he distributed his advertising literature, making it clear why the league organ should be more widely read. From the very beginning of the campaign rough board signs were to be seen around the league room, stirring up a lively interest: "Look Out for Sleepy Town," "How Is Your Gasoline?" and similar admonitions

that prepared the members to make good speed when the subscription night would come.

The speedometer was to indicate the increase in circulation actually attained. Sixty miles an hour would mean sixty subscriptions for that evening. Since fewer than thirty families were finally to be represented at the decisive meeting of that small league chapter, this would be making excellent speed. Could they reach it? To do so it would be necessary, of course, to get subscriptions from outsiders, or in some cases to subscribe for others out of their own pockets.

Here precisely is one of the most necessary and apostolic works in which Catholics can participate. They must seek to place solid and interesting Catholic journals into the hands of those who otherwise would never see any Catholic literature the whole year around, if left to their own initiative. Such reading must almost be forced upon them in the beginning, as medicine is upon a sick man. There could be no worse symptom of spiritual anemia, with serious danger of a break-down in faith itself, than the absence of Catholic literature from a Catholic home.

There are non-Catholics moreover who need the information a Catholic journal will give them. It will overcome their prejudices, an-

swer their difficulties, give them an insight into the one true religion and finally may lead them safely, with the help of some Catholic friend it may be and the assistance of the priest, into the Catholic fold.

The Sunday night before the subscription evening, of which we have spoken, the zealous advocate of the league Herald threw out among other encouraging remarks the following observation:

"Now this speedometer is going to indicate just how much faith we have in our ability to travel sixty miles an hour. Next Sunday night you are going to do just what you want to, and our indicator will point straight to our ambition. But remember that the same will that can push us to success will allow us to stand still and not move a bloomin' inch."

On the evening itself the president, the vice-president, and the pastor all spoke to the same purpose: the need of availing themselves of their literature. So finally the meeting was ready for the supreme test of the speedometer.

"We are now going to crank over," said the operator. "But first I want an expression of your faith. Every one stand up."

They did so, and he started the indicator around, asking them to sit down when it pointed out the speed which they believed they

could actually attain. It moved to ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty; and they all still remained standing. At fifty-eight he said:

"Isn't there one here who has just a little doubt? Will he kindly be honest and take his seat at fifty-eight?" But they remained immovable. Two more points, and sixty had been reached. Then they all sat down.

The real work now began. One by one, the subscriptions came in. Soon all the families had subscribed. But they were still far from their maximum speed. At forty-eight the indicator at last stood still. There were no more names in the operator's hand. There was a pitiful look on their faces when he turned to them and said: "Well, we didn't do it."

But that was not the end. He now recited for them the poem: "How Did You Die?" If we must fail, is the lesson he wished to drive home, let us be sure that we have failed nobly, doing all that lay in our power. That was a spark which might well kindle a conflagration.

A Leaguer sprang up and interrupted him: "Just a minute. I am not going to give up yet. I know we have done our best to-night, but I am not willing to stop short of the sixty-mile limit. I will be one that will guarantee another subscription!"

There were five more guarantees faster than

they could be counted. Needless to say, the indicator did not stop that night until it reached sixty. Next year they may probably need a hundred-mile speedometer.

What can we do?

CHAPTER XX

LABOR AND THE SOCIALIST PRESS

Danger of Socialist and Radical Publications

THERE is a peculiarly insidious snare into which Catholic laborers, and in particular Catholic trade unionists, are likely to fall if they are not men of clear insight and strong Catholic principles. The socialist press, they are told, is the only true support of their cause, and in evidence of this supposed fact its attitude towards the great labor struggles of the day is triumphantly cited.

Strikes and labor troubles, as we well know, are the natural element of socialism. They are sympathetically promoted by it under all circumstances. The final purpose of socialism demands no less, for it considers them as prime sources of lasting discord and discontent, and therefore as stepping stones in its way towards the great social revolution.

The remark is often made in the socialist press that labor can do no wrong in the strug-

gle against capitalism, except in so far as it uses means that might hinder the progress of the socialist revolution. Violence and destruction of property, it is perfectly true, were condemned by two-thirds of the Socialist Party at the famous convention which deliberated upon this question, but the only reason the great socialist authorities alleged was that of expediency. These means, in other words, were condemned not because they were morally wrong, but because they would do more harm than good to the socialist cause.

While appearing to labor as a friend, socialism is in reality playing the part of the great tempter. The Church, on the other hand, which fearlessly rebukes the sins of capitalism, where it is guilty, points out likewise with motherly love the faults of labor, seeking everywhere to promote the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Strikes may be morally justified or not, labor may lose or gain by them, but the socialist press is sure in every case to draw its profit. At such times in particular it seeks to win subscribers among the workers and it approaches the great labor organizations to indorse and recommend its papers to their membership for moral and financial support in return for its efforts.

Not a few of the large labor bodies of our country have thus been caught in its snares, and Catholic trade unionists have unfortunately failed to save them. Trade union principles have therefore, implicitly at least, been repudiated and the red phantom of socialism has been hailed as a friend and deliverer—and all this in spite of the notorious fact that socialism has for long years bitterly fought the trade union movement from without and "bored from within," according to its own boast.

It is to be feared that Catholic trade unionists did not realize what it meant to indorse the socialist publications which were recommended to them and to their fellow-members, or else such an insult to their intelligence and their holy faith could hardly have taken place. We would not suppose they could either be so nerveless or else so disloyal to Christ and to His Church.

What does it mean to indorse these socialist publications?

It means to bring into the house of the laborer a weekly apostle of radicalism in almost every shape condemned by the Church. It means to introduce to the fireside of the workingman's family an avowed defender of the infamies of birth control and race suicide. It

means to pollute the well-springs of pure and wholesome thought by sentiments that are anti-Catholic and anti-Christian in their tendency, in spite of the hypocritical protest that religion is regarded as a private matter, which in itself is a principle utterly indefensible from a Catholic point of view. It means to embrace as one's bosom-friend the champion of the horrors enacted against the Church by the irreligious actions that have taken place in Portugal and Mexico and have found their glorification in the socialist press. It means in fine to substitute for a manly and Catholic insistence upon justice and right the mean and diabolic spirit of envy and hatred.

These may seem hard words, but they are spoken with calm deliberation and a full knowledge of this subject from years of perfect familiarity with it.

Here, therefore, is a great apostolate for our Catholic laborers, to fight off the encroachments of radicalism in the labor movement and to substitute true Catholic principles. The task is not easy, as we well know, but the service of Christ is always attended with hardships and difficulty. He does not promise to lead us into heaven by the primrose path, but asks us to take up our cross and so to follow Him.

There is great opportunity in our day for the lay apostolate on the part of our Catholic workingmen. For this they must be perfectly instructed in the bearings of religion upon the social question and deeply imbued with the principles of their holy faith. They must be clear-sighted to see not only the dangers that threaten them, but the perils they involve for the entire labor movement.

Intelligent Catholic social study and social leadership are among the great needs of our day.

CHAPTER XXI

BROTHERLY LOVE

Charity as Taught in the Sacred Scriptures

Love of our brother is a touchstone of our love of God. "If any man says, I love God, and hateth his brother," writes St. John, "he is a liar. For he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God, whom he seeth not?" That love must be universal, all-embracing, not limited by creed or race, superior to all purely natural motives, and founded upon the love of God. It is for His sake that we love our fellow creature, made equally with us to God's image and likeness, and having with us one common human nature, the same which was assumed by the Eternal Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary. For all alike was shed the precious blood of Christ.

True brotherly love is therefore universal as the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. Its light and warmth go forth to all and its blessing is withheld from none: like the

sun that shines on the good and the bad, like the rain that falls on the saint and the sinner. "And this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God love also his brother."

The special test of the true catholicity of our love is the manner in which we regard those who wrong and afflict us. Here, indeed, we can most strikingly witness the world-wide difference between the poverty of mere pagan civilization, and the richness of genuine Christian charity:

"But I say to you, Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute you. . . . For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have? do not even the publicans this? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more? do not also the heathens this? Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect."

Brotherly love does not, because of this, blind us to sectarianism, heresy, rationalism, or radicalism on the part of those whom we still call our brethren. It does not prompt us to make compromises, however slight, with error. But it commands us none the less to love with a deep, supernatural love, for their soul's true welfare, all who may hold or teach the doctrines of which we do not and cannot approve.

To have them united with us in the one and only fold of Christ should therefore be our constant prayer and endeavor.

From this Christian sympathy even the very bigot, though most wilfully malicious in evil, is not excluded. We may not and would not because of this thrust him from the hearth-fire of our Catholic love. We lament his misguided folly; we abhor his perversity of soul; we detest his political intrigues; we have not words strong enough to express our uttermost contempt for the venal motives that could move him for thirty filthy coppers to sell Christ anew in His members, turning slander into a profession. Yet for that unfortunate himself, in his own person, we harbor no hatred in our soul, but only desire and pray for his soul's conversion, remembering the solemn admonition of our Divine Lord: "Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute you."

The man who carries hatred in his heart against a brother is classed by the great Apostle of love with the most extreme of criminals: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself."

But love does not consist in mere sentiment. It must show itself in deeds. If there is one

thing that God abhors it is mere lip-service. Christ has given us the supreme example of the love which is prepared to do and suffer.

"In this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for our brethren.

"He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him; how doth the charity of God abide in him?

"My little children, let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth."

In body and soul, our brother is an object of love for us. The corporal works of mercy are not to be considered as beneath the service of the Christian, but they should become for him a means of spiritually benefiting his brethren. The highest service is that which by the power of God helps to beget or increase faith and grace in the souls of men. To this all our efforts should tend. In this consists the Catholic's apostolate in which we all must take our part.

To crown these considerations there still remains the splendid truth, which should ever cheer and encourage us in our work,—that the true act of supernatural charity whereby we love our brother for the love of God is not

specifically different from the act of charity towards God Himself. Both ultimately terminate in Him. As His infinite goodness deserves to be loved in itself, so, too, it deserves that we should love our brother for its sake. Here therefore is the sublime motive for the universality of brotherly love towards stranger and foe, toward kith and kin. We love them all in Him who made them all, and by whose saving grace even the lowest and the worst may yet be rescued from eternal loss.

"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is no scandal in him. . . . For this is the declaration, which you have heard from the beginning, that you should love one another."

CHAPTER XXII

A NEW COLUMBIAN CENTURY

Opening Up of Opportunities for World-Apostolate

We are living in a great and wonderful age. It is an age comparable only to that in which the *Santa Maria* set sail for the discovery of a new world; an age like that in which the printing-press was invented and the wide realm of literature thrown open to all the world.

It is an age of exceptional possibilities, and therefore of equally great responsibilities. Yet many of us have not awakened to the fact. Few were interested in the great projects of Columbus; and few had the breadth of vision to realize the full meaning, for good or evil, of the newly invented art of printing.

The greatness of our age is not in its scientific discoveries and its marvelous mechanical devices, yet all these are only means to higher aims which faith points out to us. Our far-built railway lines now pierce the ancient

wildernesses and cross through uninhabitable deserts; our vast canals, rivaling in magnitude the works of the Egyptians, link together seas and oceans; our steel leviathans, freighted with multitudes of human lives, cleave the interminable wastes of waves, annihilating distance; our endless miles of sunken cable flash, with speed of thought, our messages from continent to continent.

Surely these are great achievements. Yet the greatness of our age lies not in them, but in the use we make of them. They are in themselves most limited. The tiniest gnat, disporting itself in the sunlight, an atom of joyous life, is far more wonderful than they. The speck of dust that tells of the creative power of Almighty God, of a something made from nothing, can lift our thoughts to Him who alone gave man whatever limited and communicated power he possesses of making something out of something.

We are not therefore to lose ourselves in wonderment at the works of man in themselves. They may co-exist with the grossest darkness and barbarism in the spiritual life and the most hideous depravity of morals. Signs of such conditions are apparent among many who would pretend to represent the progress of the age. They are adept in lesser knowledge and

ignorant of the supreme things of life. They have not yet learned to be humble and little in their own conception. "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," Our Saviour exclaimed, "because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father; so hath it seemed good in Thy sight."

There were material giants in the days before the flood, "mighty men of old, men of renown," as the Scripture describes them, greater perhaps in intelligence than the greatest men now living, yet even then it repented God that He had made man, and the waters of the deluge were sent to destroy forever from the face of the earth that ancient but purely materialistic civilization.

We know to what modern materialism has led in its own turn. At the height of our vaunted civilization we found class arrayed against class in our cities, and nation against nation in bloody conflicts, a thousand-fold more hideous because of that very science heralded as the new gospel of progress and enlightenment.

The greatness of our age must therefore consist not merely in the inventions of science and mechanics, but in the use we make of them for the spiritual salvation and perfection, and not

the ruin and eternal perdition of man. Enormous possibilities are offered us. Have we realized them fully? Are we utilizing them for the service of God? That is the one pertinent question for us as Catholics.

Among the many possibilities for good, which can make the present age truly and forever great in the annals of the Church, there is one which should particularly impress us at this moment. We are living in a Columbian era. A new world has been thrown open to us in the Far East, a world not sparsely peopled by a few thousand roaming savages, hunting their game over boundless prairies and through trackless forests; but a world thickly populated, an ancient civilization with hundreds of millions of souls for whose redemption Christ died upon the cross.

Close and unhampered intercourse between them and us has now at last been made possible. Our means of communication have been perfected as never before. Protestant organizations are already pouring their mighty armies of missionaries and educators into these vast fields and supplying enormous resources for the mission needs. Only little less than nineteen million dollars was the amount collected during the year 1915 for the foreign missions by the one hundred and ninety-eight

Protestant foreign mission organizations then existing in the United States and Canada.

A new world, therefore, lies open before us, and what a non-Catholic writer says of China is true likewise of other Oriental countries: "At this time of the breaking down of barriers and the reforming of China's civilization, it is all-important that every influence be exerted to make the new civilization Christian. If the new civilization of the East becomes completely materialistic, it will be a menace to the future peace of the world."

The Roman legions, penetrating to the ends of the earth, building highways and safer roads through forests and over seemingly impassable mountains, were by Divine Providence the precursors of Christianity; for in their footsteps followed the triumphant march of the cross. To-day a glorious opportunity is once more offered us for the conversion of the world. We must not allow it to pass us by. Without neglecting home duties, we can all remember, each in his own earnest and practical way, the foreign missions.

CHAPTER XXIII

OUR MISSIONS

Catholicity of the Church and Our Mission Duty

THERE is a great world-war which is ever being fought over all the earth, whose conflict extends in time from the cross on Calvary to the final coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead. It is the struggle of light with darkness, of Christianity with error and sin and paganism. To advance the standard of the King, to extend His kingdom over all the earth is the vocation of every Catholic. The extension of the Church is universal. In this consists her catholicity. She is everywhere established in her churches, schools and missions. To limit, therefore, our attention to our own narrow circle of vision and not to behold the vast harvest fields of all the earth, ripe for the reaping, is to be wanting in a deep sense of catholicity. To forget God's workmen in the field afar, particularly in the hour of their

great distress, is to be without the proper appreciation of our sublime vocation as Catholics, as members of the Church universal.

Well might the early Christian have used the argument sometimes heard in our day. They might have protested against the apostles for going forth for the evangelization of barbarous nations when their own countrymen at home had not yet been converted. Yet had they then staid in Palestine to await the conversion of the Jews, what would have become of the catholicity of the Church? Such was not the plan of the Spirit of God, however much it might approve itself to human prudence. That same Spirit still is sending forth His missionaries into distant lands, and their brethren at home must be proud to aid in that glorious work of world apostolate.

Zeal for our labors in parish, city and nation will increase as our zeal for the Church catholic, i. e., the Church universal, grows and intensifies in our hearts. Our parishes will not suffer, but will prosper the more for the charity shown to the souls in foreign lands. Our cities will not want support for their own proper Catholic works, but will find themselves blessed with better workers, men and women with a wider vision and a deeper realization of the meaning of Christian charity, because heed was

given likewise to the nations seated in darkness and the shadow of death.

True charity begins at home and in its zeal extends to the utmost limits of the earth. Nor can it be bounded even by the round of this petty planet, this mote of dust whirling through the vastness of space. It will descend in the greatness of its love, to free the souls imprisoned in the purgatorial flames, and thence mount upward to rejoice with the angels and the saints in glory. Ranging through all creation it will return only to concentrate its energy the more intensely upon that one little spot which it lovingly calls its country, its city, its parish, its home.

St. Augustine found it necessary to remind the Africans in the day of their pride, before the sun had set forever upon their glory and their power, that the Catholic Church was not founded for the Africans alone. It now seems necessary to repeat the same admonition in our day and our land. Our glory, too, may depart from us and our pride be humbled, but the Church catholic, the Church universal, shall still live on, and the work we shall do to promote her spiritual sway, the kingdom of Christ, can never perish. We must widen our vision until it, too, can comprehend the entire world; our sympathy and our service, in

prayer and work, must be catholic as is the Church.

Against the darkness covering the earth there stands out to our gaze the white, pathetic figure of the Crucified: His arms extended to embrace mankind, His heart laid open to admit them all. There long ago was fought upon the cross that Greater War which still continues to the end of time; there, too, the victory was assured to us. For that momentous conflict we all have been enlisted. It is waged about us everywhere, the spiritual conflict for the souls of men. But we must likewise help to carry its triumphs afar, into even the most distant heathen lands, by supporting our mission work.

In this campaign there is no one who need be idle. The Church has provided us with her own special organizations. Only the slightest contributions are demanded, though much may be done. For the children she has lovingly approved the Association of the Holy Childhood; for adults the Society for the Propagation of the Faith has been founded. Nor are we to forget the other missionary institutions, each advancing the cause of God, and each dependent for its success and its very existence upon our support. No Iron Cross will be pinned upon our breast, no Medal of an

earthly Legion of Honor will here be won; but the cross of Christ suffices and the joy of winning souls for Him, until death is swallowed up in victory.

CHAPTER XXIV

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S MISSION AID

Woman's Place in the World-Mission Movement

THERE is a vast world-mission movement taking place. Protestant women are playing an active and energetic part in it and have mightily contributed to its advancement. Catholic women can not, in honor and Christian charity, stand aloof. There is no one who can excuse herself for not participating in it.

Catholics indeed can have no share in the "evangelization of the world" by Protestantism. But the safety of their own missions is intimately affected by this movement and it must serve as an incentive for them to put forth all their strength in the cause of the one true Church of Christ. Is the world to be Catholic, Protestant, or pagan?

The answer to this question may depend far more than we imagine upon the efforts made in this, our own generation, by us and by our

children. It will depend in a very particular manner upon our Catholic women and the mission spirit that they succeed in bringing into our Catholic homes.

Protestantism is organized for a gigantic effort in the entire mission field, and particularly among the more intellectual and populous oriental nations. Protestant women are taking an important part in this vast work. The way has been laid open to these far countries and American civilization and education are beginning to play a mighty rôle in their development. Protestantism and modern pagan rationalism are wide awake to their opportunities. Who knows what may come to pass if the Catholic Church is inadequately supported by her own children in the mission field, while the salvation of hundreds of millions of human souls is at stake.

Shall it be said by the future historian that in this great crisis of the world Catholic women have failed to do their duty, though it was pointed out to them ever so clearly and insistently? Surely not! And for this reason such organizations as our missionary associations of Catholic women are to be most heartily welcomed and encouraged.

Protestantism has been daily disintegrating more and more. Its teachers and leaders, as

they themselves acknowledge, have to an appalling extent lost their faith in the Bible as the inspired word of God, though they still continue to distribute their copies of it by the countless millions. Where before Protestantism was a protest against the Catholic Church, it has now become a protest against its own traditions and former beliefs.

Yet in spite of these facts there is to-day a movement towards an outward unity in the mission field, a common co-operation of all the sects, agreeing to disagree upon all points of doctrine as much as they may please, but working together for this one purpose.

If, then, amid this confusion of thought and in this sad decline of faith Protestant women are found to volunteer in such great numbers and to combine in mighty organizations for the mission cause, what ought not Catholic women to be willing to do, certain as they are of alone possessing the infallible truth?

But why call upon women? Are not our men sufficient for this task?

It was by woman that Christ came into the world, and it is by the women of our day that we may hope to give Him to the world again, not indeed as Mary gave Him, but spiritually as the fruit of their labors, their prayers, their sufferings, their alms and their zeal.

How indeed can it be possible for even a single Catholic woman, with the strength of faith in her heart, to be indifferent to the great mission cause? It is a work that should appeal to her in a most special way, for are not the greatest sufferers under paganism the members of her own sex? Can any woman's heart be indifferent to the fate of the little ones who are cast out by the thousands in heathen lands to perish in the streets or in the wilderness?

Should not the heart of every woman be touched by the desolation of heathenism as the heart of Christ was moved when He wept over the city of Jerusalem? Can she be unaffected at the thought of the hundreds of millions of souls whose eternal salvation is there at stake, of the souls who may depend in a most particular way upon her own prayer, her own offerings, her own zeal?

Even where Catholic women are already interested in other Catholic mission movements, they should likewise be enrolled in their own mission associations that they may help to give to them the power and prestige which comes with numbers and success. Christ will bless this great work undertaken in His name, but Catholic women must individually perform their own part.

Here, then, a truly glorious sphere of activity is thrown open to them in which they can exercise their noblest functions of mercy. Through them alone can the mission idea be brought most intimately into the Catholic home and our Catholic mission literature be most widely diffused. New fervor will thus be aroused, and new vocations will be fostered. Circles of active workers should be formed within the various branches of our women's missionary organizations, that they may exercise their zeal on a larger scale and with even a more tireless energy than has been shown by Protestant women mission workers, who have annually collected millions of dollars through their own missionary societies.

CHAPTER XXV

A HUNDRED MILLION REASONS

Holy Childhood Association. Duty of All in Charge of Children

WE HAVE been told that there are ten million reasons for establishing a children's week in the United States. By the same count there are more than a hundred million reasons for promoting, according to the ardent wishes of the Sovereign Pontiffs, the world-wide Association of the Holy Childhood. There are more than a hundred million little ones whom we must seek to reach by it.

"It is hardly necessary to tell you," wrote Pope Pius X on January 18, 1909, "how much we and our predecessors have cherished at our heart this form of piety. The Holy Childhood Association not only perfectly accords with human sentiment, but it is likewise exceedingly pleasing to Him who said, 'Suffer the little children to come to me.' The cause of the innocent little ones is the cause of Christ. He

who preserves them from ruin dries the tears of the Church which she must weep only too frequently over her children, consigned by a new Herod to temporal or eternal destruction."

Here, then, is a glorious apostolate in which we can all participate, if we so desire. It appeals to our hearts with the most earnest recommendations of the successive Pontiffs, who have seen in it one of the Church's most cherished means for the regeneration of the world.

"Give an ever wider promotion to the Association of the Holy Childhood," wrote the Supreme Shepherd to the Director General in 1911. "It is a beautiful work which benefits in particular those little ones who never knew at their birth the joyous smile of father and mother, who found no gentle hand to aid them in their helplessness. May these children realize in this Association the words of the Prophet Isaias that new mothers shall be given them to feed and caress them upon their knees. May the little ones reared by this Association be the solace of our declining years, and may their tender innocence, preserved from godless hands, assuage the grief which the malice of their elders too often inflicts upon us."

A similar earnestness of appeal may be

found in many other documents that bring to us from the Holy See the message of Christ Himself.

The Association of the Holy Childhood is established, in the first place, to gather into its ranks our own Catholic children. It is to teach them early in life the superlative necessity of a real, active interest in the mission work of the Church, that they may later be worthy of the name "Catholic," which they are honored to bear as members of the universal Church. By prayers and by alms they are to help spiritually and materially towards the salvation of their little heathen brothers and sisters.

Every Catholic child throughout the world, says Pope Leo XIII, should belong to this Association. Every school throughout our country, says Pope Benedict XV, should establish it within its classes.

Even the babe new-born can be made a member, and the mother, or else some older sister, brother or other relative should perform for it the only two conditions that are of obligation: the little monthly offering of at least one penny, and the daily recitation of a "Hail Mary" with the invocation, "Holy Virgin Mary, pray for us and for poor pagan children." The complete offering might be made

once a year where convenience so requires it. The greater the offering the better, but only a penny is demanded each month.

Millions of children in all parts of the world are receiving Holy Baptism through this Association. Millions are sent to heaven in their white baptismal robe. Millions have already been educated by it and saved from paganism and infidelity, and millions of dollars have been contributed to bring about such glorious results.

There is one way in particular in which all can help to rescue the poor abandoned children for whom the Holy See so ardently pleads. By an offering of five dollars we can "buy a heathen child." The donor becomes its sponsor and assigns to it the name it is to bear, the name perhaps of his own dear patron or of some other saint to whom he wishes to show a most pleasing devotion.

No nobler education can be given to our children than the training which this Association affords them. It is the beginning of Catholic social work, the first lesson in the great task of world apostolate. Like his predecessors, Pope Benedict XV sought to bring home the importance of this great charity. Listen to his words!

Of the children themselves he says:

"Not without reason has the title of 'little saviours' been given to the children enrolled in the Holy Childhood. They are little by reason of their age, and little they may be said to be, chiefly in homage to the true Saviour, without whose infinite merits their apostolate would be of no avail. But when we consider the greatness of the results they are able to secure, not 'little saviours' but 'true apostles' must they be called who every year rescue thousands of children from the insatiable cupidity of inhuman parents, or who procure the regenerating water of Baptism for those children who would not have attained eternal salvation except for the work of the Holy Childhood. We hardly know whether these dear children are destined to do most good to others or to themselves."

Of the mothers he adds:

"It only remains for us to hope that mothers will not forget to speak often to their children of the children of pagans and that with the tact which only a mother's heart can find they will succeed in stimulating their children to the faithful observance of the obligations which membership in the Holy Childhood involves."

And what could be stronger than the words which now follow:

"A mother who is not solicitous to have her children enrolled in the Holy Childhood must unhappily be said not to be giving an external proof of her maternal love."

So too he exhorts the priests to keep this

beautiful work before the minds of parents and children:

"And who shall say that the parish priest is showing sufficient zeal for the good of the souls confided to him who fails to make known to his people one of the most efficacious means for putting and keeping their children on the right road?

Finally he appeals to the presidents of colleges and the directors of Catholic institutions:

"Those who have charge of the education of children cannot do better than put themselves in the place of the mother; but a mother solicitous for the welfare of her children should not delay in enrolling them in the work of the Holy Childhood. Let the directors of colleges therefore, and the presidents of institutes make no delay in having all their pupils enrolled in this most deserving and salutary work."—*Address of Pope Benedict XV, June 18, 1916.*

CHAPTER XXVI

CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Choosing Among the Many Good Works Proposed

CATHOLICS may often find themselves sorely perplexed. Appeals, urgent and insistent, are made upon them from every side. Each represents a noble cause. Each comes with the highest recommendations. Each addresses itself to their hearts and strikes deep responsive chords within their soul. They must be dead to every Christly sentiment, did they fail to be touched by them. Yet how can they respond to them all?

There are parish duties to be fulfilled. There are schools to be built and supported. There are personal calls of charity to be answered. There are social and civic interests to be considered in which the welfare of souls and of the Church is involved. There are children to be saved at home and in the lands afar. There are domestic missions and foreign missions that may not be overlooked. There are scholarships to be supplied to needy

students for the priesthood and the distant fields of labor. There is the Catholic press to be promoted and the next door neighbor to be helped or saved. Above all, there are our own homes to be sanctified ever more and more.

It is not to be presumed that each of the countless appeals can be answered by every one. Yet a general Catholic interest in them is to be aimed at by us all, aside from that most necessary assistance of our prayers which can be universal as the interests of the Christ and of His Church.

Beyond this it is only too true that our physical powers are limited, and our purses perhaps are slender. There is evident need, therefore, of what at the head of this chapter is described as Catholic Perspective.

Perspective is used in a picture to convey the impression of depth and distance. All the objects in a given scene are represented by the artist, but not all are given the same fullness of light and treatment. Some are large and in the foreground. Others are small and more vaguely seen in the distance, though not therefore lost to sight. They, too, have been lovingly dwelled upon by the painter.

Accordingly as the same scene is represented from one point of view or from another, objects change their position and their relative

importance in the picture. The distant cliff which blends with the mist can be set in the foreground, catching up the splendors of the morning on its peaks of eternal snow, with the waves curling white about its rocky base.

So the various classes of Catholic interests: the interests of home and parish and country and distant mission field are all embraced in the zeal of the faithful. They neglect none of these if they wish to be worthy of the name they bear. Yet all these interests cannot stand out with the same largeness and clearness, nor can they have for all the same relative position. But a proper Catholic perspective will include them all, and give to each its due importance in our lives. That importance may differ according to each one's peculiar situation, his opportunities and the lights God deigns to give him.

Home interests are never, therefore, to loom up so mightily that they obscure all other vision. This would not only indicate a total absence of perspective, but the absence even of all appreciation of the meaning of Catholicity itself.

The words of the cardinal archbishop of Lyons deserve to be quoted in this connection. It was suggested to him in the midst of the dreadful distress caused in his country by the

world war, that it would be imprudent under such conditions to urge the people to contribute to the foreign missions. With a noble indignation he answered: "Only persons little instructed in the life of the Church would argue thus. To come with an alms to the aid of the missionaries is to lend to God. He will be happy to give us interest on the loan."

Our perspective, therefore, must be catholic. It must include, as far as possible, the wide field of the Church's activities. We should strive to assist, at least in a general way, in all her large interests, though we can not enter into all their details. The sophism that our help is exclusively required at home must be no less indignantly rejected by us than by the apostolic prelate whose noble words deserve to be recorded in letters of gold.

But a perspective there must be, a proper understanding of the relative importance of lending assistance to the various Catholic interests as seen at any moment from our own particular point of view. The Spirit of God may help us here by His own special lights and attractions. Objects that stand in the foreground of one life, may be set in a more diminished distance in another, no less holy and perfect. Each soul requires its own lights and its own guidance, aside from the obvious duties

of the state of life and the surroundings amid which it is placed by God.

What can therefore be said for all alike, is that in the first place our interests should be catholic. They must not be limited to home and country, but should embrace the entire world, as the Heart of Christ embraced it all.

In the second place there must be a reasonable perspective: a due appreciation of the relative importance of things from our own peculiar position. In no two lives is this likely to be the same, but catholic it should always be.

CHAPTER XXVII

HELPING THE CHRIST CHILD

Charity Toward the Little Ones

ONE of the sweetest forms of Christian charity is that which spends itself upon Christ's little ones, or rather, we should say, upon the Christ Child Himself represented by them.

"And taking a child He set him in the midst of them. Whom when He had embraced, He saith to them: Whosoever shall receive one such child as this in My Name, receiveth Me."

To clothe our dear Jesus, to wrap Him about cozy and warm, to fill His little heart with joy by the presents we bring Him, has been the delight of Christmas time for many Christians. The stable and the manger are still with us as of old, under many forms. We need but the spiritual vision to see them. With the shepherds we still may come and offer our gifts to Joseph and to Mary for the Christ Child bedded on the straw.

Would you know where to look for Him? Then look upon this picture:

It is an attic chamber with a broken window in the slanting roof. The plaster is falling from the walls. A few worthless prints are hung upon them showing that the love of beauty has found an entrance even here. There is a basin and a broken pitcher in a corner, and elsewhere about the sides of the room stand a chest and an empty bed. The little girl who has just left it is sitting in her patched gown at a bare table, in the middle of the room, with only the extinguished candle before her. Her head is buried in her left arm upon the table, and we know that she is weeping bitter tears. Her right arm is extended over the edge of the table and from her hand there hangs a torn and empty stocking. No one has filled it for her. It is her Christmas morning.

No! As we look again, it is not the little girl; it is the little Christ Child who is weeping there; for once more the world has passed Him by and knew Him not.

"I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink. I was a stranger, and you took Me not in: naked, and you covered Me not; sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me."

There was an invalid, crippled in girlhood, lying on her bed, thinking thoughts like these. God had granted her talents and means, but had touched her in His love with a great affliction. An accident had deprived her, as it seemed, of all possibility of ever doing active good among her fellow men, though her sufferings and prayers, as she well knew, could prove mightier with God than the deeds of kings.

There she lay, as Christmas approached, thinking of the Christ Child, and her heart burned within her for love of that sweet Babe of Bethlehem. How He loved the poor, whom he left to His Church as the most precious of all her earthly treasures; and how He loved the little ones! And there arose within her the vision of many a cheerless home that should be brightened by the charity of man and the love of God at this blessed Christmas season. How then could she be idle?

In her mind the little hand of the Christ Child had sown the seed of a great and noble work. It grew and flowered and quickly ripened into a perfect plan,—and lo! by the grace of God, the Christ Child Society had come into being. It began in Washington, for the lady we have described was Miss Mary V. Merrick, the daughter of a distinguished lawyer of the

nation's capital, and it soon established branches in various cities of the United States. Thus it was the Incarnation of Christ that gave birth to the Christ Child Society and still inspires its members.

Seeing the Christ Child in His little ones who share with Him His own poverty it seeks to bring help to them in their spiritual and bodily wants. It has assumed many different forms in different cities, keeping always in view the central object: "to aid and instruct neglected children and to uplift and brighten their childhood." Christmas is its particular season for dispensing the bounties of the Christ Child among the poor.

All can be of assistance in this work, whether as members or contributors. A favorite practice is to give enough for the complete clothing of at least a single child.

Those indeed who wish to bring relief and joy to the Christ Child in His little ones and hear His sweet words of approval, "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, you did it to Me," should not have any difficulty in finding ways and means, either through the Christ Child Society, or through their local Catholic charities, or through the Association of the Holy Childhood for the salvation of pagan children, since the little

ones afar are no less in need of our help and love than the little ones anear, and must just as well depend for Christmas charity upon us alone. Through the purchase of a heathen child we can secure for them the great blessing of Holy Baptism as a Christmas gift and save them from starvation and death.

Make them your choice. Do not forget the Christ Child during any season of the year, but least of all during the holy Christmastide. Remember above all that your gifts should be contributed to the support of thoroughly Catholic charities. They will go most directly to the poor and not into the pockets of salaried officials. Only thus can they be truly Catholic, profiting the soul as well as the body.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OUR CHILD CAMPAIGN

Saving the Souls of the Little Ones

"SAVE the child!" is the cry of the nations. It rises like a solemn warning and appeal from north and east, from south and west. "Save the child that you may save the nations!"

A multitude of happy children, growing up into a hardy people, is everywhere desired. But we know that numbers alone do not suffice. Our millions of citizens may increase and yet our worth be lessened. Of what value indeed, in the sight of angels and of men, is a wicked and godless generation like the giants of old, calling down God's wrath upon the earth?

As Catholics we are interested in the little ones. None so much as we. We seek their spiritual even more than their temporal welfare. We wish to save them from a twofold death. We know that to preserve only the bodily life of the child and permit it to grow up without religion is a doubtful blessing for

the little one. What shall become of its immortal soul? Better for it that the day of its birth had been blotted out from the days of the year, that its little body had perished like a bud nipped by the frosts of the early spring, than that its soul should be doomed not merely to exclusion from the vision of God, but consigned for all eternity to that final destruction which awaits all who die in the state of unrepented mortal sin.

But what then are we to do?

We must in the first place provide adequately for the temporal needs of the Catholic mothers and their little ones within our own parish, wherever distress may exist. Those who are most in need may never perhaps come to us. It would be well if, with the aid of our parochial societies, every section of our parishes were combed so finely and so thoroughly that nothing were left unexplored and therefore unattended to and perhaps fatally neglected.

Yet this is only the preliminary or accompaniment of the most complete spiritual help, encouragement and future provision extended to all. Here is the supreme object of all our efforts. There are baptisms to be performed, there are children to be sent to the Catholic schools, there are negligent households to be

built up anew, by the aid of the priest, into truly Catholic homes.

Practical suggestions for the taking of a complete census by means of our sodalities or other societies were given in the chapter headed "Something Definite to Do." This will be the beginning of a thorough and apostolic campaign on the part of the priest and of the people.

Protestants are often exceedingly active in such campaigns. Catholic men and women have a far greater and nobler work to perform. The priest cannot see to it all. The laity too must act, under his approval and direction it is true, but not without their own initiative as well. They must feel that they are part of the great apostolate of the Catholic Church. They must contribute their service no less than their alms to the vast interests of Christ.

There are day nurseries, Ozanam clubs, settlement houses, Catechism centers and other kindred institutions to be established or supported for the protection and education of children, according to the various needs and possibilities of time and place. Where the necessary funds are still wanting a thousand acts of Christian charity and apostolic zeal can nevertheless be performed. Individual as well as organized efforts must be made.

Above all, there are the Catholic schools to be equipped and supported. A kind and timely, but likewise well and prudently considered word spoken to parents may save many a Catholic child from the dangers of attendance at public or other non-Catholic institutions. Zeal for the Catholic school is so fundamental that it would seem unnecessary even to mention it to intelligent Catholic readers. Yet we know what strange notions at times exist in the minds of the faithful in spite of the most explicit warnings of the Church.

There are three steps to be taken in the interest of every Catholic child within the parish. The first is to secure for it the blessing of Holy Baptism at the earliest opportunity. The second is to provide for it the Christian surroundings of a truly Catholic home, by stimulating the parents in the exact fulfilment of their religious duties. Lastly there is the need of the Catholic school, to be insisted upon from first to last, from the earliest rudiments to the finished university training.

But Catholic interest in the child is not limited to our parish or even to our city. It is nation-wide and world-wide. In the latter instance it is manifested in the hearty encouragement of such organizations as the Holy Childhood Association. In the former it can

be shown in the support of many other excellent institutions, such as the great needs of the day may call into existence.

An instance of the latter was the founding of the Order of Martha, the Women's Auxiliary of the Catholic Church Extension Society of the United States. Organized for the purpose of establishing and maintaining mission schools in connection with the chapels of the Extension Society it is helping to preserve in the Faith the countless children in danger through temptation and lack of instruction. Thus American home mission work was brought close to the hearth of every American woman. The dues of fifty cents a year are within easy reach of all. "Near as your writing table is the door to the missions," was the appeal sent forth. The opportunity which every truly Catholic mother would secure for her own child, at any cost to herself, she certainly will likewise seek to secure for the children of other mothers less highly favored than she.

The enemies of the Church are reaching out eager hands for the soul of the child. Hence the Socialist Sunday schools, the anarchist Ferrer schools, the rationalist institutions, and all the countless schools in which no religion is taught, and which are of necessity the seed

plots of indifferentism and so of irreligion, if the latter is not their immediate result.

There are thousands of movements of every kind all tending to attract and interest the young. A thousand dangers and snares are placed in their way, from suggestive and immoral moving picture shows whose unclean tentacles are wound about their heart, to the sectarian nets of the Y. M. C. A. that entrap them even should no evil be meant. What are we doing to save our Catholic children?

CHAPTER XXIX

CATECHISM CENTERS

The Lay Apostolate of Teaching Catechism

MRS. BROWNING touched the hearts of her generation with her passionate pleading for the little ones. Their cry, as we hear it rising from the mines and mills of England, was for bread, for play, for the rights of human nature. More imperative far is the cry of the Catholic children of our day. It is a cry for the Faith of which so many are being deprived through the indifference of parents, through the activity of the proselyter, or through sheer neglect.

Cardinal Vaughan, when bishop of Salford in England, instituted a careful inquiry into the spiritual condition of the children in his diocese. The census disclosed the appalling fact that 8,445 of these little ones were in danger of losing their faith. Needless to say that serious efforts were instantly and successfully made to remedy this condition.

Turning to the United States we find that, according to a general estimate, there were

said to be no fewer than 1,800,000 Catholic children deprived of the benefit of a Catholic schooling. Who can say how many of these were in danger of losing their faith?

The indifference, negligence, and frequently the ignorance of parents is doubtless one of the principal reasons of the extreme peril to which no small portion of this vast army of our little ones is exposed because of inadequate Catholic instruction. Among many of these children, in city and country, the proselyters are busy at work. Others are left to grow up almost in utter godlessness and to supply the Juvenile Court with thousands of victims accredited to the Catholic Church. In not a few cases, particularly in the country, the remoteness or even total absence of churches is mainly accountable for the defections that occur.

What is to be done to remedy such conditions? The practical answer has been found in the establishment of Cathechism Centers.

In every city and throughout our country districts the institution of these Centers is one of the most urgent needs, calling for the personal service of thousands of Catholic laymen and women. Public school teachers, it is true, are particularly adapted to this work and have accomplished it with wonderful devotion and success, but there is no reason why it should be

confined to them. Our sodalities, our Holy Name societies, and similar institutions should be able to furnish abundant recruits for this great task from every parish of the land. Our colleges can find here an admirable outlet for the zeal they are meant to infuse into the hearts of their students.

Everywhere there are children, perhaps scores or hundreds of them within the limits of a single parish, who are not receiving adequate Catholic instruction. Even could they all be gathered together, there would then not be Brothers and Sisters enough to give to them the individual attention needed.

Large parishes may at times call for no fewer than three or four catechism centers and as many have actually been established. In localities where no churches exist, such centers may often form the nucleus of a new congregation.

"In the diocese of Pittsburgh," says a writer in "America," "there are today seven new parishes with resident priests and one chapel, all of which have been erected within the last seven years, mainly through the efforts of the teachers of the Missionary Confraternity of Christian Doctrine." The latter is strictly a lay organization.

Even where flourishing parochial schools

exist such centers may be indispensable, if we would properly reach all our children. The fact that parents may be culpably neglecting their religious duties is no reason why we ourselves should neglect the immortal souls of their unfortunate children. Would the Good Shepherd, think you, have permitted these little ones of His flock to be lost, or would He have gone forth to seek them and with joy have folded them to His bosom?

But the objection may naturally be made: "Will not such work injure the parochial school?" To this difficulty a zealous pastor rightly responds with a decided, "Not at all!" The children who are gathered by these lay messengers of Christ from the highways and byways of country and city, would rarely ever have entered the parochial school. "The Catholic Instruction League," as Archbishop Harty says, "instead of injuring the parochial schools, will benefit them."

At all events, it is a Christly work. It is a necessary work. Nothing must be permitted to stand in the way of saving these immortal souls. We are indeed to gather into our Catholic schools all the children we can, our zeal for them can never be too great, but let us not forget the little ones who through no fault of their own are deprived of this great blessing.

They, too, have souls to be saved, for which Christ died upon the cross. "We are undoubtedly bound," says Archbishop Messmer, "to take care of the souls of these children, just as well as of those who come to our schools."

Shall we allow it to be said of us that while the shepherd and his lay auxiliaries were fast asleep, the proselyter was abroad, alert and active, sparing neither cost nor labor to sow the cockle in God's field? Are we less capable of work and sacrifice than he?

It is consoling to note the splendid work that has already been accomplished by the laity in this field. We have here the solution of one of the greatest problems facing the church today, and may heartily subscribe to the judgment pronounced by Bishop McGavick, when he says:

"The ideal, the perfect solution of the religious instruction problem would be so to extend our parochial schools as to afford accommodation for all our children, but the realization of this ideal lies in the far distant future. In the meantime it is our sacred duty to take hold of and instruct in the precious heritage of the faith each generation of baptized children.

"In my opinion the plan and method of the Instruction League form the best system for

the doing of this that has come under my notice. I venture to predict that this plan will daily grow in favor with both church and school authorities and will finally prove a most practical and adequate solution of the vexing problem of religious instruction for a large portion of our growing youth."

Catechism centers are indispensable in large cities, but they are equally necessary in country districts. The true heroism of the lay catechists who have devoted themselves, week after week, to this work has indeed been remarkable. Thus they have found that in various towns, where there was neither Catholic church nor Sunday school, the majority of pupils in non-Catholic Sunday schools were children of Catholic foreigners and as many as thirty or forty of these boys and girls were at times recovered by them from such schools in a single afternoon to be instructed in their own faith.

But it is important that Catholics in distant localities should likewise be taught and encouraged in every possible way, by priests and bishops, to take up this great work. Thus Bishop Wehrle ordained for his diocese that, "Means must be found to gather *all* children of *every* mission on *all* Sundays for religious instruction." The italics are his own. The Bishop adds:

"Where many children live far from church, organize Sunday schools in different parts of the missions, so that every child can reach the place of instruction without difficulty. Catholic families are glad to offer their homes for such a purpose. Priests who make the visitation of the parish and keep the *Liber Status Animarum,* as the Church prescribes, will find it easy to decide where such centers of instruction are needed."

He finally desired that at his episcopal visitation these teachers should be introduced to him that he might give them to understand how greatly he appreciated their apostolic efforts. Similar determination has likewise been shown by ecclesiastical superiors in other dioceses. May Catholics everywhere interest themselves in this apostolate, even though their task should be confined to the private instruction of but a single child requiring their attention. In city, town, and country there is need of a vast army of lay volunteers to carry on untiringly this glorious lay crusade.

They are co-operators with God in His most sublime work, the salvation and perfection of immortal souls created to His own image and likeness. Theirs, too, shall be the splendid reward exceeding all words: "Those who instruct others unto justice shall shine as stars

for all eternity." Let them never yield to discouragement even should their work not meet with its due appreciation, or fall short of the results they had expected. "Patience and Perseverance" is their watchword. Our Lord's own life was not all a brilliant success, as the world saw it.

The Catholic Instruction League adapts itself to all circumstances. It teaches on week-days after school hours as well as on Sundays, according to the possibilities of teachers and children. Wherever it is established the local ecclesiastical authorities determine its entire course. Let it only be established everywhere. There is need for it everywhere. There is need in every city of a legion of zealous lay catechists who shall take their place with our priests, our Brothers and Sisters in helping to extend the kingdom of God, to upbuild the Heavenly Jerusalem, to save immortal souls for Christ.

CHAPTER XXX

VACATION SCHOOLS

To Aid Our Children and Save Them from Proselyters

"THE Kansas City Daily Bible School Association," read an account in the local "Times," March 15, 1917, "is considering opening its summer schools the Monday following the close of the public schools this year, rather than the first Monday after July 4, as had hitherto been its custom." Nothing could more clearly illustrate the zeal of Protestants for their vacation schools. The paper added the further information that this association had conducted seventeen vacation schools in Kansas City, Mo., during the preceding year.

In the city of Chicago thirty-seven vacation Bible schools opened on June 26, 1916, and thirty-two more began their activity on July 5 of that year. The same year 25,000 children, representing thirty-nine nationalities, were gathered together into the Philadelphia

vacation Bible schools. Yet this work may be said to have been only at its beginning in the United States. The Dallas "News" prints a summary of the activities of these Philadelphia schools from which the following quotation will suffice:

"Eighteen colleges contributed teachers, money and supplies to the work, and fourteen denominations co-operated in it. Its wide range may be judged from the fact that among the schools there are five for Hungarian and Magyar children, twelve for Italian children, ten for Negroes, and eighteen for Jewish boys and girls. There are 330 teachers who look after children of thirty-nine nationalities, says the 'Christian Science Monitor.' Eighty churches, tents and settlement houses will be thrown open from July 10 (1916) until the middle of August, and children from four years of age to fourteen will be taught practical lessons in philanthropy, the Bible, and manual training of various kinds."

How many of these vacation Bible students were children of Catholic parents? How many of the pupils in those twelve Italian Bible schools in particular were Catholic children sorely in need of education in their holy religion? Yet not Italian immigrants alone, but those likewise of other nationalities, too

frequently show themselves indifferent to their holy faith. Protestants are active among them all, and if they accomplish nothing else they may at least rob them of the last remnant of Catholicity that still remains. The fire which we might perhaps have fanned anew into a living flame is thus entirely extinguished.

We must make sure of the children. Well indeed if we could gather them all into our Catholic schools! But we know this to be impossible at the present time. We must, therefore, labor to save them in another manner, so far as lies within our power. Hence the need of Catechism centers in all our cities, and we might readily enough say in practically all our parishes. The relation between these centers and Catholic vacation schools is obvious.

Fortunately we have facilities for this latter work which no other denominations enjoy to the same extent. The advantages are all on our side, if we will only properly avail ourselves of them. They consist in the simple fact that our Catholic schools throughout the country can at any time be thrown open for this purpose during the vacation months. They have been erected at great cost and sacrifice, and should be made to advance to the utmost the greater glory of God by serving to

extend in every way the kingdom of Christ upon earth.

We have not merely our Catholic school buildings ready for such a purpose, but we have likewise our great body of Catholic students from our many Catholic Colleges who can devote at least some of their leisure time to such apostolic work, in co-operation with our other Catechism teachers. Protestants are finding abundant volunteers for this undertaking. Surely we should be able to obtain them far more readily and in immensely greater numbers. Nor will Catholics in general fail to give contribution to such an enterprise where the need is intelligently represented to them.

It is well understood that other attractions besides mere Bible reading are held out by Protestants in their vacation Bible schools. Catholics are not wanting in intelligence to solve this problem in their own way; but they may likewise learn from their Protestant brethren wherever they find such lessons practical in their own conditions.

Catholic societies, in fine, should interest themselves in such work. Here is a splendid field for the activity of our parish sodalities and Holy Name societies. Such an apostolate will be of no less benefit to them and to the

parish in general and to the pastor in particular than to the children for whose instruction it is undertaken. It will galvanize our Catholic organizations into new life. It will help to increase their membership and their devotion for every Catholic cause. Vacation schools themselves will in turn develop Catechism centers, so that the children cared for during this brief period will not be lost to sight during the course of the coming year. But neither vacation schools nor Catechism centers will thenceforth set bounds to the flames of Catholic apostolic zeal once they have been thus kindled in the hearts of the parishioners. They will spread throughout parish and city, and will seek to enfold the world itself in the fires of the love of Christ.

A word may likewise be profitably added here about the need of providing proper instruction for our lay catechists.

The records of a successful Protestant Sunday school director were recently published in a Toledo paper. Within twelve years he had increased the membership of his Sunday school classes from 150 to 5,000 pupils. The secret of his success, he tells us, lay in the fact that each of the 123 teachers in his school was "an associate pastor." That is to say, each had been trained to do the work as well and ef-

fectively as a pastor himself could have done it. Even the janitor became one of the most efficient teachers.

Catholics will not be outdistanced by their Protestant brethren. They have far greater reasons for zealous and untiring efforts, and they, too, realize the need of centering their attention on their teachers.

After the help and grace of God, which must be obtained through persevering prayer, the prime condition of success in the lay apostolate of Catholic Instruction must be looked for in the doctrinal soundness of the lay teachers. Some may require less direction than others, yet care must be taken that all are rightly prepared for the intelligent fulfillment of their sublime task. So will sound doctrines be imparted and false consciences will not be given to the children under their instruction. The practical handling of Catechism charts and similar aids likewise merits attention.

The enterprise and organization of our separated brethren has here been referred to merely as a stimulus to urge us on to greater efforts in the service of God. If amid their uncertainty and confusion of beliefs they still can often devote themselves to their labors with so much enthusiasm, what ought not we to be able to accomplish with the full and un-

questionable assurance of alone possessing the entire deposit of Divine and infallible Truth? Catechism centers, under whatever form they are conducted, suggest themselves to every thoughtful Catholic as the one means of solving what is perhaps the greatest modern problem of the Church.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

The Scripture Parable and Its Modern Application

A DESERT and rocky way, filled with caverns and intersected by valleys, a haunt of robbers; such was the lonesome road that led down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Its dangers were well known to those who listened to Our Lord as He told the parable of the man who fell among the robbers.

We have not the same vivid conception of that scene which Our Saviour chose for the familiar setting of His narrative. Yet the story itself appeals perhaps no less to us than to the Jews who first heard it from the divine lips. It is constantly repeated, not only from the pulpit, but in our social literature as well. The interpretation given by those without the Fold may often be entirely false, but the truth and beauty of the parable can not fail to impress all alike, whether Catholic, Protestant, Jew or infidel.

We are told by Our Lord of a lonely trav-

eller on that treacherous road who fell into the hands of bandits. They robbed him of his purse and stripped him of his garments. When perhaps he sought to defend himself they struck him to the ground and left him lying by the wayside, bleeding from many wounds. It was only another unfortunate added to the victims of their misdeeds.

A rabbi, as it chanced, went down that same way. He had completed his temple worship and offered up his sacrifice to the Lord, but his heart was not converted. The minister of a religion which teaches mercy to all in need, he had contented himself with mere lip service, with outward rites and formularies. These indeed were not to be neglected, but they were meant to furnish an expression of a profound interior service and devotion of the soul, of a fear and love of God which should richly overflow in acts of charity to our fellow-man.

"If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lie underneath his burden, thou shalt not pass by, but shalt lift him up with it," the Book of Exodus says. How much greater was the need of that poor victim lying by the way. But no thought of brotherhood entered the darkened mind of the pharisaic minister of God's law. He saw the pitiful plight of the poor unfortunate, left half dead upon the road,

but he passed by without a qualm of conscience.

"In like manner also a levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by." He, too, though of an inferior order, was privileged to minister in the temple of the Lord; but the great truths of his religion, the supreme doctrine of charity, of love for God and man, which embraced all the law and the prophets, had never penetrated deep into his soul. He, too, was hardened in his selfishness, and apparently without any sense of personal responsibility towards his neighbor. Perhaps when later he told of that shocking sight, his words may have waxed warm and eloquent in denunciation of the carelessness of the guardians of order and the negligence of the men in authority. Their culpability may have been very real, but it did not excuse him from rendering his own service of charity when it was needed.

His action is that of the socialist who denounces alms and charity, but insists instead upon a reversal of the entire social order. His own actions are often better than his doctrine. It is well and good and absolutely demanded of us to remove the causes of public wrongs and dangers, but we must likewise assist by alms and personal service those who may be actually in great need of our help, whatever the

ultimate social source of their afflictions. This immediate service Christ taught in His parable, and not, as radical writers claim, the proper policing and lighting of that dangerous road. This latter work was doubtless of great importance, but Christ had here another lesson to teach, a lesson which those who denounce alms and charity refuse to see.

There came along that road a third traveller, a Samaritan, a man whom the rabbi and the levite despised from their inmost soul. A deadly hatred had been handed down through generations, and existed now between the Jew and the Samaritan. He too, saw the victim of man's inhumanity to man. It was a Jew who lay before him, his own enemy, a man who despised him. So he might have argued, and have gone his way, less to be blamed than the rabbi or the levite. Yet he knew that it was above all things a human being, a fellow-man, who therefore had a right to all the claims of human brotherhood, which must not be denied him. Nothing could every destroy the common Fatherhood of God.

"But a certain Samaritan being on his journey, came near to him; and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and setting him upon his own beast,

brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two pence, and gave to the host, and said: Take care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I, at my return, will repay thee."

Our Lord's lesson is plain.

"Which of these three, in thy opinion," He asked of the lawyer who had drawn from Him this parable, "was neighbor to him that fell among the robbers?"

But the lawyer answered: "He that shewed mercy to him." To which the Lord replied in turn: "Go, and do thou in like manner."

CHAPTER XXXII

CHARITY OR PHILANTHROPY

Why Catholics Should Support Their Own Catholic Charities

We all doubtless wish to remember Christ in His poor. It is the test of our love for Him, and His words of divine mercy can never be silenced in our hearts: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me."

But to attain their desired end our alms must be given according to piety and prudence. Not after the prudence of the world, but after the wisdom of Christ. Where, therefore, we do not in person dispose of our offerings, they should be distributed through Catholic organizations established for this purpose.

There are many reasons for insistence upon this principle. In the first place, money thus given will not be absorbed by an army of salaried officials who often receive the lion's share of alms given to "scientific" philanthropic societies. Philanthropy is a business with these

people. They have prior claim, though the poor should receive only the leavings. The proposed condition that the cost of administration for such organizations should not exceed sixty per cent is made by a social writer as a conservative demand. Some social workers are, in fact, mere parasites.

Catholics, on the other hand, have for their excellent almoners the Religious Orders or congregations devoted to works of charity, the St. Vincent de Paul councils of their own parishes, the local Christ Child Society, and countless other parish or diocesan organizations and institutions. Practically every cent given will thus reach the poor instead of making a short circuit into the pockets of a legion of paid officials.

This does not exclude the assistance of paid social workers for labors which require such constant attention as only professional service can give. This service, too, can be Christly in the highest and the truest sense. It is meant to aid and render more fruitful, but not to supplant the free service of Catholic charity.

It must also be remembered that the mere offering of a gift is the smallest good accomplished by Catholic charity. There is a spiritual benefit to be attained both on the part of the giver and of the recipient of the favor.

The Sisters upon their rounds of charity, the Vincentian investigators or the Christ Child visitor bring into the homes of the poor far more than mere wealth can bestow. The love of God is the sole motive that inspires these devoted men and women who serve Christ in their fellow man as Mary swathed His infant limbs in swaddling bands and received Him again bruised and torn and gashed to her bosom from the cross. To communicate this same love to others in the greatest richness is their supreme and ultimate purpose. Here, then, is the essential distinction between Christian charity and secular philanthropy.

There is a third reason why Catholics should distribute their alms through Catholic agents. Our own people will not be discriminated against, as is often likely to be the case, particularly where donations are sent to a great distance. Thus in certain Armenian collections made in England and the United States, previous to the world war, Catholic Armenians were said to have been almost entirely excluded from any share in the alms. It would be easy to quote similar instances nearer home or of more recent date.

The Church has ever been the great almoner of the world. It is out of her hands that our Catholic charities should be distributed where

they are not personally given. It is thus they will reach farthest, will accomplish a two-fold good, and will bring due assistance to those most intimately dependent upon us. We have our poor at home, our poor afar, and our poor in the starving Catholic missions praying for help lest they perish. Those without the Fold are not overlooked. Catholic charity will wisely remember in all things what is right and proper and well pleasing in the sight of our common Father.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE CHURCH AND SOCIOLOGY

The Reason for Catholic Social Schools and Catholic Social Literature

"WHAT has the Church to do with sociology?" is the question that has often been proposed in the past.

"She was instituted for the salvation of souls and not to found schools of economics or concern herself with the problems of social service. Christ came that men might have life, the supernatural life of the soul, and might have it more abundantly. For this reason, too, did He found His Church, and for this alone."

The statement thus made calls for careful investigation.

There are in the first place those who preach a purely "socialized" church. They either entirely deny the existence of a personal God and another life beyond the present, or they teach that social conditions must first be righted and poverty abolished before we can give our thoughts to more spiritual matters. This,

they claim, is religion pure and unadulterated, progressive, modern, socialized religion. For the intelligent Catholic such extravagances require no refutation.

There are, however, in the second place, those who with the best intention and the purest motives pass to the opposite extreme and deny that there is any relation whatsoever between sociology and religion. They may base their arguments upon entirely correct principles, but the conclusions they draw from them are wrong and misleading.

It is true that the ultimate object of the Church is the glory of God and the salvation and ever greater perfection of souls, but they fail to take into account that the means used to accomplish this end may in themselves be purely natural. The work which we perform with these means must be rendered supernatural by the purity of our motives in using them. The same social work performed alike by the "uplifter" and by the Catholic social worker may in the one instance be purely natural and in the other highly supernatural, being done purely for the love of God.

In the first instance it is intended only to procure a temporal benefit for those whom it assists; in the other, it is directed to a higher end. The genuinely Catholic social worker,

who is not to be confounded with the mere "social uplifter," has one supreme purpose always in view, and that is his own spiritual perfection and the salvation or greater perfection of the souls of others.

The greatest social worker of all times was Christ Himself. He went about doing good, not only spiritual but temporal good as well, curing the infirmities of the body and giving strength to the palsied limbs. Yet He had come to save the souls of men.

The cry in our day is for preventive social work, which consists in not merely healing the evils that follow from human ignorance, indifference or injustice, but in removing the causes of them. Here, too, Christ is our Leader. He has laid down a code of morality for rich and poor which has given the world the only final means of removing temporal as well as spiritual ills, in as far as may be in accordance with God's holy will. This code is the unfailing guide of the Catholic social worker.

So strongly has He insisted that we should devote ourselves to the exercise of charity towards our needy and suffering neighbors that it is the only virtue which He chooses to mention in His description of the last judgment. Though other duties will not be overlooked on that tremendous day, yet He presents the duty

of charity as the great test for our salvation.

"Depart from Me," He shall say to the lost, as He dismisses them into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. "For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink. I was a stranger, and you took Me not in: naked, and you covered Me not: sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me."

To this will the lost cry out in their despair: "Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?"

But Christ will answer them in these burning words: "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me."

Now what has all this to do with our subject?

Christian sociology is in brief nothing less than the science of charity and social justice. But to secure the latter for our neighbor because of our love of God is likewise an act of the truest charity. The purpose of Christian sociology therefore must be, if true to its high ideals, to teach men the best ways of practicing charity under the difficult social conditions under which we live. The complexities of modern life and the enormous populations of our modern cities, where men do not know their

next-door neighbor in the crowded tenements and even in the fairer residental sections, have introduced difficulties that are altogether modern, and modern means must be used to solve them.

Sociology, as the world gives it to us, is largely and often frankly pagan. Yet it contains much that is of practical value to us. We therefore have borrowed for our own Catholic sociology whatever was true and good in the work even of men who may have been positively hostile to Christianity itself, as the Christians in other ages rightly built their churches with the stones taken from the pagan temples.

It is not merely necessary that we should bring relief to the bodies of men, but that by this means we should exercise a spiritual influence which will enable us by God's grace to save their souls. Hence again Christian sociology, which is the science of social justice as well as of charity, must teach us to do this work most effectively. To direct the trade unionist aright, to save the laborer from the snares of socialism, to rescue Catholic children from falling under non-Catholic control, to save the morals of our girls, to advance indeed the cause of morality everywhere and in every way through the social agencies of our day,

these surely are worthy objects for any Christian to propose to himself as his life's work.

There are moreover complicated legal processes we must understand, there are juvenile courts and a thousand technicalities with which the Catholic social worker of today must be acquainted if he would save, to the utmost of his power, the souls of the defectives, the delinquent, the poor, the immigrants to our shore and of all the numbers without number who may be rescued from apostasy or vice by means of social service practiced according to the mind of the Church.

This is the reason for Catholic schools of sociology, for a Catholic literature of sociology, for Catholics devoting themselves to social service. Surely there is a connection, strong as links of steel, between the Catholic Church and the study of sociology from the Catholic point of view.

At the opening of the sociological department of Duquesne University Bishop Canevin, with his wonted foresight and quiet determination, made himself sponsor for the new movement and earnestly exhorted young men and women of intelligence to avail themselves of the opportunity offered them. He gave it as his conviction that no one can be prepared to fulfil properly the duties of any kind of active

charitable or social service among the people without study and knowledge of the subjects and problems discussed in our Catholic schools of sociology. He went still further and earnestly exhorted his priests, and in particular the younger clergy, to attend these courses.

A primary idea of Catholic social service is that it should everywhere be under the intelligent guidance of the Church, through her clergy. This is impossible if the latter are unacquainted with the scientific methods of our day and perhaps even with the very nature of the delicate problems that confront us. Social science is not to replace Christian charity, but Christian charity is to transform and transfigure all that is best in the social science of our day. This is precisely the object of the Catholic schools of social service. The closer they come to this ideal the more perfectly will they answer the purpose of their institution.

Social science is made the conveyor of every form of rationalism and radicalism. It is difficult to select books dealing with social topics that are not tinged or perhaps even strongly saturated with principles and theories that are un-Catholic and un-Christian. Yet these problems must be studied. And the greatest care must be taken to guide our young men and women through these studies that

they may not, like so many others, be lost in a labyrinth of error.

To sum up what has been said: the Church was not instituted to teach social science, but she was instituted to save souls, and study of social science from a Catholic point of view is one of the most necessary means to compass this end, in our day. By this study souls will be saved from the contagious and all-pervasive influences of modern radicalism, which ultimately means godlessness. Catholic schools of social science are a necessity of our times.

CHAPTER XXXIV

FALLEN AMONG ROBBERS

Social Evils and the World's Apostasy from the Church

MANY and deep are the wounds of the social body. We have accustomed ourselves to call them social problems; but the origin of them all is plain. They have been inflicted by that threefold conspiracy against humanity: the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Many cures have been proposed, but they are ineffective or only touch the surface of the evil, because they do not take account of its true nature. Socialism, like an unskilled surgeon, may have labored assiduously, but did not understand the injuries inflicted and only widened the gaping wounds and made the quivering flesh more sensitive to pain.

Endless social legislation was the next cure-all, some of it necessary and good, some of it superfluous or harmful, all of it only partially effective. Every desirable social legislation is doubtless to be encouraged and supported

with all our strength. It may often go far towards bringing relief. A certain measure of such legislation will always be required even in the most ideal human society. But the ceaseless call we are forced to make upon it in our day is a confession of weakness. It shows the utter helplessness of modern civilization which has been so boastful of its progress, so arrogant and vain, and has consequently been permitted to experience its own frailty and ineffectiveness.

"Because thou sayest: I am rich, and made wealthy, and have need of nothing: and knowest not, that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

To understand the true nature of the wounds from which society is suffering, and to be able to apply to them the one indispensable remedy, we must go back to the parable of Our Lord concerning the man who fell among the robbers. The whole story of our present ills is given there. We need but read the words of Christ in the light of the clear exposition offered us by the Fathers of the Church.

The man fallen among robbers represents our poor human nature despoiled by sin. God had originally endowed it with the most magnificent gifts. Pure, strong and beautiful in soul and body man came from the hands of his

Creator, with a keenness of intellect, power of will, and freedom from concupiscence that made him indeed fit to rule with becoming majesty over all God's visible creation. To these glorious natural qualities were added the lavish and inestimable riches of supernatural grace.

But in spite of God's goodness man yielded to temptation and transgressed the commandment of his Maker. That human nature, so magnificent in its endowments, had in truth fallen among robbers. Sin had despoiled it of its treasures of original justice. Wounded and bleeding from many frightful gashes, it might justly have been left to perish. But God had compassion upon it. He Himself became man. As the Good Samaritan, He came to lift up poor, perishing, fallen humanity; to pour into its gaping wounds the oil and wine of His saving doctrines; and finally to bring it into the hospice of His holy Church. There it should thenceforth be provided with every remedy and all the most loving care.

In casting off God's help, in rejecting the aid of His Church, humanity has again been left to bleed and suffer upon the highway of the world. Its wounds are all the result of sin, original and personal. Some of them we have called "the problems of our age." They

are the effects of man's inordinate desires, of his blindness and perverted will. They were all struck by sin.

As Catholics we therefore clearly see both the nature of the evils from which humanity is suffering and the remedy that must be applied. The conclusion is evident. There can be no truer social work, no more effective charity than to bring mankind back to Christ, to restore to it His doctrines and His sacraments. They can be found in their entirety within the Catholic Church alone, since it alone goes back to Him through its long series of Supreme Pontiffs, His visible representatives, beginning with Peter, to whom He gave the keys of His kingdom. The Catholic Church is the one hospice of the Good Samaritan, instituted by Him for the salvation of all mankind and the remedy of all its ills.

The Church indeed is not concerned directly with economic problems. But she alone can, to the utmost extent possible, restore the lost justice and charity to earth, and so remove to that same extent the causes that have given rise to these problems and decide with certainty all moral issues that now are disquieting the world.

Catholics will not, because of their spiritual

interests, neglect the lesser and immediate means of material social service. They will rather take an active and foremost part in them. But they will at the same time understand that the causes of social evils lie far deeper than mere sociology knows, and cannot be reached by any purely material remedy. Their greatest task must consist in helping to bring back the nations to Christ. He Himself went about doing material good to man, and so too His followers have done, but with the same sublime supernatural purpose: the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Faith in Himself was a condition Christ required even for His temporal cures, and faith in all its fullness we must help to restore to mankind. To this work we must apply our united and individual energies. It alone can secure a true social renewal.

Suffering and evil will not disappear from the world with its conversion. But moral evil will be lessened to the utmost and the physical suffering, where it exists, will be sanctified and rendered meritorious. The Church holds out no false promises as Socialism has done. She knows that ours is a fallen nature, even at its best, and that the consequences of original sin will still manifest themselves even to the end of

time. And yet, referring to the sin of Adam, she can truly exclaim, "O happy fault!" Out of suffering itself, hallowed in the passion and death of Christ, she can weave for us a crown of glory.

CHAPTER XXXV

HAVE CATHOLICS A SOCIAL PROGRAM?

Catholics Have the Only Consistent International Program

THE question at the head of this chapter is often asked of us. Its answer is plain and direct: Catholics have a social program. What is more, they alone have a consistent, thorough and universal program that is accepted by them in every part of the world.

Socialism might once have laid claim to at least a limited social program when the doctrines of Marx and Engels, its infidel philosophers and revolutionary law-givers, were more blindly followed than in a later day, and when their false theories were not yet so widely exposed and disproved. But no tentative proposals for a future socialist commonwealth ever received the universal consent of socialists, while on the other hand Catholics of the entire world have united upon the program drawn up for them by the Vicar of Christ,

however inadequately it may have been carried into effect.

Socialism is divided into countless opposing factions. No one can be accepted as speaking authoritatively for all. At the present writing there is hardly a single point of agreement left among those who call themselves by the name of socialists, except perhaps the general idea of the socialization of the means of production and distribution. But even this idea is differently modified by almost every socialist of note. Hardly any will be found to agree upon the extent to which such socialization is to be carried out. Even the method by which it is finally to be introduced remains a bone of universal contention. Socialists can not, therefore, be said to have anything approximating to a complete and distinctive social program.

It is true that socialist political parties in the various countries have advocated a list of social measures, including shorter hours of work and more desirable labor conditions. But these have nothing to do with socialism. As propounded by its promoters, they are simply an exaggerated expression of the true and sane doctrine upon these points clearly put forth in the Catholic social program. Socialists use them as a bait to catch voters, and as

a preparation for the introduction of what is finally to be the real socialism, although a Babel of conflicting voices at once greets us when there is question of practical future measures.

Not such the program of the Catholic Church! There is here no vagueness, no disagreement. The great outlines of the Catholic social movement are laid down with absolute clearness and precision. To learn them we need only turn to the marvelous social Encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII. If we seek them in a more condensed form we can find them in the briefest possible compass in the first fifteen articles of the Fundamental Regulations of Christian Popular Action drawn up by Pope Pius X.

We have here no disagreement among these greatest of authorities, who speak with perfect unanimity. Pope Pius X tells us that he has sought to do no more than collect in abridged form, from the documents of his great Predecessor, the regulations that must be fundamental in determining the popular social action of Catholics.

Christian Democracy or Christian Popular Action, in its general principles, is the same in every country. Between the broad outlines of the principles underlying the social pro-

grams of Catholics in Italy or England, in Germany or France, in Belgium or Austria, in Holland or Spain, there is not the slightest divergence. Nowhere else is such consistency, such thoroughness, such unity to be found in thought and action.

Yet there is here no question of irrational obedience or of slavish imitation, as might seem to the non-Catholic reader. The reason making possible such unanimity is the simple fact that these principles are not the result of mere theorizing, like the socialist program, but are founded upon the natural law and the precepts of the Gospel. They must consequently be of universal application, and it is eminently reasonable to conform our actions to them. They represent the absolute truth as written by God in the nature He has created or in the doctrine He has given to man. Such is the impregnable basis of Catholic social action.

Catholics, therefore, have the only absolutely true, lasting, universal and perfect social program.

The Holy See, it is evident, does not attempt to legislate for local conditions. Its rules are only such as can find a general application in every country. They afford the broad outlines, which the local Catholic social

workers must fill in according to their own wisdom and prudence, acting under the guidance and with the approbation of their ecclesiastical superiors.

Catholics, therefore, have been wisely provided with a complete general program of social action. The particular applications they themselves must make according to the constantly changing conditions of time and place. But their main guiding principles are all clearly laid down as derived with absolute precision from the Will of God made known to them through the natural law and the precepts of the Gospel. These conclusions have finally been drawn up and given to them by the highest authority upon earth, the Vicar of Christ.

CHAPTER XXXVI

CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION

Our Enemies Are Organized. We too Must Organize

WHATEVER signal success the enemies of the Church have achieved against us in the past has been due to organization. Individual efforts, no matter how determined, can accomplish little except in so far as they may stimulate men to unite for a common purpose.

The children of the world have never failed to learn this lesson. It was thus—God permitting it—that they compassed the death of Christ, and it is thus that they have sought to bring about the destruction of His Church. Their method is nowhere more perfectly illustrated than in the life of our Divine Lord.

Jealousy and hatred had long smoldered in the hearts of the chief priests and Pharisees, though they dared not publicly apprehend Christ. But their rage at the very thought of Him and their dread of His success could no

longer be suppressed when He performed the great miracle of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. That display of divine power, which should have converted them, if their hearts had not been hardened and their eyes blinded, was only the occasion of bringing them together for concerted action.

"The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees, gathered a council and said: What do we, for this man doth many miracles?

"If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him; and the Romans will come, and take away our place and nation.

"But one of them, named Caiphas, being the high priest that year, said to them: You know nothing.

"Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

How admirably the enemies of Christ and His Church have always justified their nefarious activity. We still behold them alleging the same reason of patriotism in our own day. They are again plotting in secret hoping that the day may come when they may deal with the Church as His enemies dealt with Christ. The death sentence is written in their heart, and gladly would they execute it. Organization is the means that they are using.

The wisdom of the world must not be ignored by us. Organization is the natural method of success. It is by this we must in turn defend the interest of Christ and of His Church. It is by this we must save ourselves from destruction. It is the one efficient counter-method if we would battle effectively for the cause of God.

Organization can not only save us from destruction—the Church herself can never be destroyed—but can be made the means of accomplishing boundless good for the bodies and souls of our fellowmen. By organization we can become a mighty power for relieving the distress of the poor and afflicted, for furthering the cause of right and justice, for helping to bring the divinely revealed truth to the knowledge of the world, for upbuilding everywhere the Catholic Church and the Catholic school after the mind and heart of Christ. We can overcome the crassness of ignorance that may still exist on the part of some who have been deceived into beholding in the Church a peril to our nation, while we can disarm the bigotry of others who in our day are repeating against her the iniquity and hypocrisy of the chief priests and Pharisees of old.

Every Catholic must therefore consider it

a point of duty to join in the work of Catholic organization. Mere membership in a Catholic society is evidently not sufficient, but active and efficient membership is required. We must help to do our share in seeking to lift our organizations out of the narrow sphere of selfish interests and make of them effective instruments for progressive work, for the fearless defense and zealous propagation of the Church of God. In the social, educational and religious field they should be signal and foremost, that the eyes of the world may be turned to them, not indeed for their own glorification or for ours, but for the great glory of God in all things and forever.

There are likewise social and civic movements of every kind which are not conducted under Catholic auspices. Yet Catholic participation in them may often be counseled by the aims of charity or justice which they seek to promote, or by the influence which can thus be exercised to safeguard and advance the true interests of the Church.

But such participation should presuppose an active zeal in the promotion of our own Catholic movements and organizations. The fact is that the men who have here most worthily represented the Church are they who have likewise been the most energetic, intelli-

gent, and devoted leaders in all Catholic enterprises. A brilliant example was the great American Vincentian, Thomas M. Mulry, whose life may be summed up in the few brief words: All for Christ, for His Church, and for His Poor! Nothing could have been farther from his mind than the seeking of his own glory or advantage. Such is the true type of the Catholic lay apostle.

We are living in a period when apathy means defeat, and indifference is criminal. We have in the past been too much disinclined to public activity in the cause of Christ, but we must hereafter do violence to ourselves and bravely overcome our inherent inclination to reticence and ease. Our minds, our hearts, our hands, our means, must be placed at the disposal of the propaganda for strenuous, efficient, universal Catholic organization. We must conquer ourselves for the love of Christ and He will help us in turn, by His bountiful grace, to win the world for Him. This is the one thought that should inspire us, the one motto that should be written upon all our banners: " The World for Christ! "

CHAPTER XXXVII

CATHOLIC CONVENTIONS AND CONGRESSES

Their Value in Promoting Catholic Interests

THE swallows and blossoms come with the spring and the conventions and congresses are no less sure to follow with the summer months. Catholic organizations are not idle and seek to do their part in this work, but Catholics themselves are not all equally enthusiastic.

"Are conventions," they ask, "worth all the expenditure of time and means and labor that is demanded on their behalf?"

Some are more than sceptical upon this point, and Catholic congresses may not always answer the sanguine expectations entertained by them. Yet conventions in themselves play an important rôle in many of the most successful non-Catholic enterprises and Catholics too must learn to avail themselves of them to the best advantage.

One of the foremost purposes of a Catholic convention is the interchange of views among

its members. Men and women, gathered from far and near, because of their serious interest in some great Catholic work that is meant to promote directly or indirectly the welfare of Holy Church, cannot meet without profiting from the opportunity of mutual consultation which is here afforded them. Thus the experience of one often becomes a lesson for all. Utopian schemes which might lead to waste of time and energy, if not to greater evils, are shown to have been tried and found wanting. Practical suggestions are proposed in their stead which have been slowly matured through years of thought and labor.

Nothing, we may add, is more contagious than enthusiasm, and this is likely to be the dominant note of every convention. It infuses a new spirit into those who come beneath its sway. They return to their work with a quickened pulse, a higher motive, a stronger power of will to achieve their great task for the cause of God to which they are devoted.

Companionship itself with Catholic men and women, fired with the same ideals that animate us, is no slight gain. The friendships here formed may not seldom prove useful even in future years. We are stimulated by beholding what others have done and are doing and the feeling of discouragement which is likely

to attend our efforts when they fail to meet with due appreciation and support is more readily overcome.

To the Catholic worker indeed nothing is so disheartening as the lack of response on the part of his fellow Catholics. A spiritual tonic is needed to strengthen him, and it should be the object of our conventions to supply this in bountiful measure. It is necessary that spiritual motives should ever be kept foremost in our view and that the heart of the crusader, eager to do battle for Christ, should be made to beat high in the breast of all during these days of study and discussion solemnly opened with prayer and the Holy Sacrifice to bring God's blessing down upon them.

The work of Catholic societies must be lifted out of the selfish and purely utilitarian grooves into which they may have run and made efficient likewise for the promotion of God's kingdom upon earth. Conventions offer a wide field of apostolate for the true Catholic idealists. Men of strong faith and clear vision can here point to the heights of nobler sacrifice and promote more genuine devotion to the great interests of the universal Church.

All honor to the leaders of Catholic thought and action who with sure and fearless hand seize these occasions to harness more firmly to

the brilliant star of God's greater glory the societies of which they are members.

Clearly, Catholic conventions offer incalculable advantages and splendid opportunities for good. But the objection which is still most frequently urged against them is that their resolutions too often remain ineffective. They are passed in the glow of enthusiasm, we are told, and then consigned to paper, and perhaps little more is ever heard of them until they are reviewed in the succeeding year.

Granting that there is much truth in this objection and that Catholic organizations can fruitfully examine their conscience upon this point with the purpose of a sincere amendment, yet it is likewise true that this same objection is often overstated. There is another view to be taken. While not a few convention resolutions have little or no practical effect, others may be the source of great undertakings.

Resolutions, in brief, are like seeds scattered with a lavish hand. Many may be found to have fallen by the wayside or to have been suffocated in a tangle of weeds that have been allowed to grow up about them, yet some at least are likely to fall upon good ground and to mature under favorable circumstances. Who knows whether they may not yield the hundredfold! Without such sowing, be it remem-

bered, there could not even be the hope of a harvest.

The resolutions formulated in the fervor of our conventions have often been very ineffective. What if we grant this to be only too true? Does it excuse our own inactivity?

It is easy to stay at home and find fault with others. The manly and Christian part is to bear our share in the burden of the day, to stand forth and bravely urge or support the resolutions which should be accepted, to battle thereafter fearlessly through the course of the year for their fulfillment, as far as may lie in our power. The greater the number of *active* members, of the men and women of character, determination, and high ideals who attend these conventions, the greater likewise is the probability that these resolutions will not be lifeless seed to perish without fruit.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

OUR CATHOLIC PALLADIUM

The Catholic School, the Hope of Christianity

THERE was among the ancient Greeks the legend of a statue or image of the armed goddess Pallas Athene, which was said to have been fashioned by her own hands and to have been cast from heaven by Zeus for the safety of the city of Ilium.

It was brought to the fortress of Troy by Dardanos, as the story runs, and the belief of the Trojans was that their city would remain impregnable so long as it contained this figure, known as the Palladium. The Greeks, therefore, when planning to capture the Trojan stronghold, first sought to remove this obstacle to their success. Two of their chieftains, Ulysses and Diomedes, finally carried it off and the fate of the city was sealed. The Trojans were conquered and Ilium fell in flame.

There was never a Pallas Athene, save in the pagan poet's mind; and the Palladium, which

the Romans in later days pretended to have preserved in their temple of Vesta, was at most a heathen superstition which in times of danger might prove useful to quicken and sustain the courage of the city's defenders. But a modern parallel may here suggest itself. Like all comparisons, it must of necessity be imperfect.

Pallas Athene is not merely the warlike goddess; she is the goddess of wisdom. Minerva the Romans called her. She was the protectress of learning. The modern Palladium about which the most embittered battles of our day are fought is the school.

Socialists, anarchists, rationalists of every dye and color seek to obtain possession of the minds of the young. Give them the rising generation and they will dominate the world. The guardians of Christian civilization are no less aware of this great truth. The Catholic Church has realized it and the Catholic episcopate has fearlessly proclaimed it. One of the first and foremost duties of every Catholic layman is to defend and support the Catholic school.

The Church can never fall like Ilium, wrapped in flames; but Catholic education is necessary if we would keep the Faith active and alive in our land, if we would promote the

kingdom of Christ upon earth. He Himself did not dispense with natural means and we find Him in the Gospel as the Great Teacher in the midst of His own select school of the Apostles.

Like Ulysses and Diomedes, planning to steal the Trojan Palladium, the enemies of the Church are everywhere seeking to rob her of her Catholic schools. Every persecution is immediately directed against them. They do not so much fear the religious education that is given to the child outside of the walls of the Catholic school, as the constant, daily influence of the Catholic school room itself.

Here the truths of religion are profoundly instilled into the mind of the little one; here the doctrine of Christ becomes real and palpable to it; here the sweetness and gentleness of Mary, the Mother of God, is made to sink deep into its soul. It is true that the children in our Catholic schools are perfectly trained in all the knowledge of the world; they can often shine superior to those of other schools in matters of literature, book-lore, or dexterity; but over and above all this they have something which no other school can give them. They have daily been conformed more closely to the image of Christ according to the measure of skill and devotion displayed by their instruct-

ors, and the pliancy with which they have yielded themselves to the teaching of man and the grace of God.

Catholics have been slandered or misunderstood in their attitude towards public education. They are far from being opposed to public education in itself; but they point out the impossibility of doing justice to the child when religion is excluded from the school. They insist, and rightly insist, that their children must be taught the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, where the Gospel of Christ is concerned. This can be given them in the Catholic school alone, and therefore there can be no other school than the Catholic school for the Catholic child.

There is no worthier work in the lay apostolate than that which consists in aiding the priest in the upbuilding and support of the Catholic school, and in ever increasing the number of those who are here gathered together about the knees of Christ to learn the lessons of heavenly wisdom while not neglecting the wisdom of earth.

As Catholics we must fearlessly, yet prudently, safeguard and defend our own Catholic Palladium: the Catholic school, and college, and university. The Church, we repeat, can never fail, but the Faith can greatly be

lessened or extinguished in many hearts if Catholic education is made to suffer. It is a fact which Satan has well understood in his plans for the destruction of the souls of men. Hence the virulence of the attacks he everywhere instigates against the Catholic schools; hence, too, the need of our united and loyal defense of them.

No Pagan Pallas, but the Mother of Christian civilization, the Protectress through the ages of all true learning, art, and science, the Catholic Church, has fashioned for us that Christian Palladium, the Catholic school.

CHAPTER XXXIX

HOME AND PARENTHOOD

Christianize the Home to Save the Child. Birth Control

THE voice of Rachel is heard in the land, the voice of the Church, and she will not be comforted, for the loss of the souls of the young. How many of the young men in particular, who should have been her pride and joy, have been destroyed through indifference and neglect! How many are to-day spiritually dead to her! There are few problems of such importance to parents, to pastors, to our Catholic societies and to Catholics in general, as the preservation of our Catholic youth.

It is with the home that we must begin. The first to be concerned are the parents. They are their children's keepers, and in vain will they plead an excuse for their negligence. It is not sufficient that their children receive Catholic instruction, and continue and complete their education in a Catholic school. It is likewise necessary that parents never cease to

watch thereafter over the piety, faith and morality of those committed to their care. They must gently but firmly oppose the first tendencies towards laxity in religion, which they observe in them. A break in the dike, ever so small, though a child's finger might stop it, may be the beginning of a deluge that can destroy a city. Particular watchfulness is necessary on the part of parents when the period of schooling is closed and the new life of work has begun.

One of the first manifestations of decline is a lessening in the frequency of the reception of the Holy Eucharist. There is reason for disquietude when monthly communion is discontinued. Every possible attempt indeed should be made that our young men approach the Holy Table at least once a week. This they should do even when it is not at times possible for them to go to confession, provided only that they are not conscious of mortal sin upon their souls. If this ideal seems too high, it is less than the ideal which the Church herself proposes in frequent and daily Communion. The young man needs it most of all.

But it is not sufficient to act only when the first signs of laxity manifest themselves. To wait for these is to lose half the battle. They merely indicate that harm has already been

done which perhaps will never be wholly repaired. This is particularly true when the school years are completed and the years of labor have set in.

The evil has often begun, though unperceived, in childhood and infancy itself. The serious effects show themselves only when strong temptations present themselves in later years, and the immediate influence of the Catholic school has been withdrawn. That parents may therefore properly perform their sublime function they must always be exemplary Catholics themselves.

That our Catholic youth may not drift away from the Faith, by gradually growing tepid and indifferent, Catholic parents must firmly set aside from the very beginning the false educational principles of our day, which permit the child to develop freely according to its instincts and inclinations. They must deeply implant in its soul respect for authority, human and divine. They must in particular preserve inviolate their own authority within the home, ruling it gently but firmly, according to the law of the Gospel. They must strive to lead such lives that, like the Apostle, they can bid their children to be imitators of themselves as they also are imitators of Christ. They must watchfully prevent the occasions that

might lead their children into temptation, as they themselves avoid such dangers on their part. They must zealously provide them with a Catholic education and Catholic literature, observing their reading, their companionship, their amusements and occupations. They must teach them to value their faith, and the grace of God above all things upon this earth. They must constantly seek to develop in them a firm and manly character that spurns what is base and disloyal to God and Church. They must endeavor finally to foster in them an intense interest in all that concerns the propagation of their holy faith.

With this noble work should be combined ceaseless prayer for the souls of their children, as the mighty means of enlisting Heaven on their side. Let the angel guardians of their little ones be to them a God-given assistance in their sublime task. It is concerned with nothing less than the salvation of the souls of their children, and through them, it may be, of unnumbered other souls for generations to come.

Since holy communion is the barometer of the spiritual life, their own frequent presence at the Holy Table should stimulate the frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist on the part of those entrusted to them. What parents themselves can not accomplish the priest

may then effect in the confessional and our Divine Lord can bring about in the sacrament of His love.

The first responsibility for preserving the Faith in our young people devolves upon the parents. It begins with the earliest training of the child and calls for a constant and watchful activity through the years of boyhood and youth. The effects of that labor will continue, with God's help, as a saving, elevating and ennobling influence even to the grave of those whom they have guarded from the cradle to the maturity of a noble Christian manhood and womanhood.

Greatest of all honors and blessings that earth can know is the vocation of priest and Religious. Yet not the least reason for its preciousness consists in the parenthood of souls that it implies.

But sacred, too, beyond words, is the sacramental union of husband and wife. They are privileged to co-operate with the creative power of Almighty God in bringing into this world creatures endowed with the same nature which the Eternal Word of God assumed, descending through all the angelic choirs to be incarnate of the Virgin Mary. They are privileged to beget children who through Baptism are to become the temples of the Holy

Ghost, and in whom Christ Himself would live that through them He may continue to do good to men upon earth and glorify His Father who is in heaven: "Abide in Me, and I in you." They are privileged to give earthly being to those who are called to fill the thrones of glory in heaven and to participate with Christ in His eternal inheritance, made coheirs with Him in His kingdom.

Holy indeed is that state of life, and sacred are its duties. Parents, therefore, especially must be mindful "to glorify and bear God" in their bodies. They are placed at the springs of life which must be preserved by them pure and inviolate. What words then can express the horror they should feel at those sins of the modern world which should not even be named among Christians, were they not so constantly flaunted before us—those sins that lay waste the human temple of the Holy Ghost and sacrilegiously bring into it the abomination of desolation.

Life is precious with an eternal preciousness, and the Christian mother will not refuse her duty, nor forego her glory of giving to God those generations which on the last day may rise up, they and their children and children's children, a mighty throng, with palms in their

hands and songs of joy upon their lips, to proclaim her blessed.

Here surely is true greatness for any man and woman, no matter whether they live in palace or in hovel.

CHAPTER XL

OUR GREAT PARISH PROBLEM

Preserving the Boys after Graduation

PERHAPS the greatest of all parish problems is that which deals with our young men. Happy the pastor and the people who have not to mourn the indifference or even the total loss of some of those who should be the hope of our future Catholic manhood, the strength and support of the Church!

It is not possible here to enumerate the causes and occasions that have been their undoing. Some have drifted into a gradual neglect of their duties because there has been no one to care for them, to give them any particular attention, to admonish and encourage them. Others have been subjected to the manifold temptations of our modern world, and there was no firm and friendly hand to save them. Whatever was the reason, we cannot now permit them to be lost.

There are countless things that can be done to interest and enthuse our Catholic young men. There is only one suggestion, however,

with which we shall here deal. It will not conflict with any of our other undertakings for the young, but can be fruitfully carried on in conjunction with any of them. It may contain for many readers at least the germ of splendid work that can be accomplished for God's glory in helping to save our young men. Similar plans might with equal profit be adopted for Catholic girls by our women's sodalities and other organizations.

The suggestion was given the writer by one who has enjoyed a vast experience, and has everywhere directly come into contact with the startling facts of the loss of so many of our young men in the parishes throughout the land. His advice is very simple, and for this reason promises to be the more effective. It is besides of universal application, demanding nothing more than zeal on the part of the pastor and of his willing lay apostles.

"Let every parish," he said, "have a card catalogue of all its young men. Let it always be kept in order and be made absolutely complete."

Such a catalogue would contain the names and actual addresses of those who have passed through the parish school, and of all the young men within the parish limits who are or should be Catholics.

"In the second place, let the entire parish be districted. For each block or section one zealous and tactful promoter should be appointed."

The duty of such a promoter will be to investigate his section in the most thorough way. He will live within it or else in its neighborhood and so can carefully study the situation. He will know every young man within his own district and learn whether he belongs or should belong to the Church. He will thus keep perfect and up-to-date his own list of names in the card catalogue.

"The next task of such a promoter," said the widely-experienced priest, "will be to see after the spiritual welfare of each of the young men now under his supervision and special care."

It will be well for him, we may add, to enlist in this work the immediate neighbors and friends of the young man whom he wishes to bring back to his religious duties, or whom he wishes to encourage to become a more fervent Catholic and a more frequent communicant. He will thus strive above all to infuse his own spirit of zeal into all with whom he comes into contact, while he can always firmly rely upon his pastor for instruction, support and encouragement in every difficulty and need.

"But how is this entire work to be unified?"

"The center and goal will be the general

monthly communion of all the young men of the parish. All absentees will be carefully noted, and instant inquiry made by the promoter responsible for them. He will not rest until he has brought them back to the Holy Table, and has assured himself of their regular monthly attendance."

Even then he may still continue by all means possible to encourage them to advance in fervor. It will be well for him to set the example of receiving our Divine Lord at least once every week.

No mention has here been made of clubs, libraries, gymnasiums, and the many means of instruction and amusement that can attract and benefit young men, though such exterior aids will greatly simplify the promoter's duty. Similarly no particular society has been mentioned under whose auspices this work might be carried on. The purpose was to propose the present plan in all its simplicity. It can be adapted to any circumstances even the most humble and unpromising.

Its center of attraction must be the Holy Eucharist, and the peace and love and joy which flow from this fountain source of Catholic life. The Divine Lover of souls is mightier than all our human means in holding to Himself the hearts of the young who are

taught to come to Him confidingly and lovingly. He will be able to preserve their purity and to increase their fervor and their faith.

But no human expedients which we can employ should for this reason be ignored. They are left, however, to the pastor's own discretion. The temporal welfare of the young men must not be overlooked, and the opportunities of helping them to secure suitable employment or of being serviceable to them in other ways should be gladly sought out.

The director of the young men's sodality would here have a powerful means to leaven the entire congregation. The promoters would form that inner circle which is supposed to be the sodality's core. His own brief, but zealous and instructive exhortations at the monthly Communion Mass intended for all the young men of the parish, without any exception, whether sodalists or not, would work wonders.

Every sodalist moreover could be encouraged to aid the promoters in this sublime apostolate, whose goal would be to make of all our young men fervent Catholics and enthusiastic participants in all parish activities.

Similar movements may be inaugurated for other parish members, as may seem expedient. Protestants have successfully used such methods in districting a city and assigning pro-

moters for every block. We surely will not be outdone in zeal.

Here, then, is a fruitful suggestion for practical work. If taken up throughout the land it would, humanly speaking, be our strongest assurance against loss and constantly increase the numbers of the faithful as in the early Church. The zeal of the promoters, and those laboring with them, would have no limit and we would educate a generation of apostles through whom might be brought about, with God's help, that earnestly longed-for renewal of all things in Christ, in which His charity shall reign supreme.

CHAPTER XLI

THE CITY'S DANGERS

Temptations Besetting the Young of Both Sexes

Our zeal for the salvation of our young men and girls, and through them of the future generation, must begin with those of our own household and of our own parish, but it should by no means end with them. The young of our entire city stand in need of our help and general co-operation is necessary. There is evidently question here of one of the most momentous problems of the Church in our day.

Who can enumerate all the dangers that surround our boys and young men in the busy city with its countless allurements to vice and its constant perils to faith! There is the evil companionship of the streets and often the constant association with non-Catholics that is likely first to beget indifference and then total neglect of religious duties. There is the pool-room with its debasing influence and its soli-

citations to worse evils, not seldom leading to corruption and the dens of impurity. For many a Catholic boy it has doubtless been the ante-chamber of hell. There is the sensuous theater with its stage reeking with defilement, where a few pennies will admit them into an atmosphere of sin that might destroy the soul of a saint. There are "movies" of an almost equally destructive character that will supply them, at an even cheaper rate, with the food of perdition.

More dignified, and yet a serious peril to their faith, the Y. M. C. A. invites them into its cozy quarters, and offers them every facility of instruction or amusement. But the spell of indifferentism is cast about them, an anti-Catholic spirit envelops them, they naturally lose their fervor, their intensity of Catholic perception, their high esteem for their religion, and perhaps at last that most precious heritage for which the whole world can never compensate them, their Catholic faith.

Another danger resulting from constant association with non-Catholics is the mixed marriage. Under the circumstances we have described, where the religious foundations of our young men have already been undermined, it will almost certainly prove disastrous to them. An indifferent Catholic married to a non-Cath-

olic wife can be saved, we are tempted to say, by a miracle only.

The dangers enumerated here are not exceptional, as we well know; they are common and persistent. They are to be found everywhere, and our cities and parishes are filled with examples of the wreckage of souls caused by them on every side. Not even an attempt has been made to complete the long list of the causes, occasions and influences of evil that are constantly at work to destroy the souls of our Catholic boys and young men. Similar dangers threaten our Catholic girls. The application can readily be made by the reader. Not seldom the identical temptations apply to both alike. Nor is country life safe from these or similar perils.

Many there are whose very home surroundings are a menace. They are living in the midst of temptation and sin. Others by their very employments are brought into contact with it. They are prematurely wise and old. Yet jewels may be found hid in the mire. God's grace is wonderful, but we must do our part in co-operating with it faithfully.

But why recount all these facts with which every reader may already be sufficiently familiar, and to which he could, without second thought, add instances from his own experi-

ence, limited though it may be? Why dwell upon the obvious?

It is true that these are uncomfortable facts and not consoling reading. It is true that we might prefer to rest contented with the satisfying truths of the beauties and glories of our Church, which no one can gainsay. But to realize in our own lives the ideals of that Church of God we must understand that its first requisite is *service,* the service of God and of our neighbors. The glorious title of the Supreme Pontiff is that which represents him not as commanding, but as serving: "The Servant of the servants of God." So his Divine Master before him stood in the midst of men, not as one being ministered unto, but as one ministering.

There are many forms of Christian service that can be rendered to our neighbor. It is not the purpose here to draw comparisons. But Catholics as a body must not neglect that particular service which consists in preserving from ruin our Catholic boys and young men and our Catholic girls exposed to temptation, and often left with no one to reach out to them a helping hand.

We surely are our brothers' keepers. Of this great truth Catholics are daily becoming more fully aware. Individual efforts alone,

as we know, are not sufficient to solve so grave a problem as that which confronts us here. Co-operation is required. Splendid efforts have already been made in this regard, and we may trust that much more will be accomplished in the future. The problems here presented will be considered more fully in the following chapters.

CHAPTER XLII

DELINQUENT CHILDREN

Methods of Saving Them for Church and Society

To save our Catholic children, whose faith is so often seriously menaced in our cities, organization has become an imperative necessity. It is gratifying to note how Catholics have already perceived the truth of this and have not failed to act upon their convictions. But few realize the full magnitude of their task.

The nature of the organizations required naturally differs according to local needs and possibilities, as likewise according to the circumstances which have called them into being. Certain types, however, are sufficiently common and are demanded in every city.

Thus the necessity of Catholic probation officers for the younger delinquents whose age brings them under the jurisdiction of the law has now been widely recognized. Organized efforts have been made within the various com-

munities to provide such officers, whose responsibility lifts them far above the mere court official. They are Christlike guides and helpers of the delinquents rescued by them.

Associations of voluntary probation officers can be formed by energetic laymen, or existing Catholic societies can supply individuals for these positions or pay intelligent Catholic social workers to devote their time to this important function of saving Catholic boys from prison and reformatory. Once committed to these institutions the young are only too likely to go forth from them hardened criminals, because of the associates forced upon them. Their faith above all is placed in dreadful jeopardy.

Saved from commitment, all these children must be guarded and watched and helped in every way. Such a task may at times exceed the strength even of the most devoted probation officers.

In conjunction with the latter, therefore, a Big Brothers organization can be formed to provide adequate and zealous guardianship for such children. These men will give their personal attention to the boys saved from the corrupting influences of reformatory or prison life. They will help them to obtain an honest sustenance, see to their proper Christian in-

struction and to the faithful performance of all their religious duties. They will be their guides and protectors.

They are true soul-savers, walking in the footsteps of Christ their Lord, looking forward to His divine approval in the future and the joy in the present of making true Catholic men of the charges entrusted to them. Their influence likewise extends to the homes of the boys and reaches out, no one can say how far. Similar to this is the Big Sister movement.

The most perfect fulfillment of this duty of rescuing the delinquent children can perhaps be obtained when each parish provides its own probation officers or Big Brothers who take care of the boys within their own parish limits. Thus according to the report of a parish "Boys' After-Care Society" in England forty-one boys were being looked after, five of whom at the close of the year were very good, thirteen good, twelve fair, and eleven unsatisfactory. In the "Girls' After-Care Society" forty-five cases were looked after, and at the end of the year twenty-nine were found good, five fair, and eleven unsatisfactory.

It is consoling likewise to see the steps that have been taken by high ecclesiastical authorities to secure Catholic co-operation for the salvation of these boys and girls; and it is no less

edifying to observe the zeal with which Catholic men discharge their duties as probation officers and Big Brothers.

In this connection it may be sufficiently appropriate to call attention here to the important work accomplished in saving those children who for no delinquency, but because of the death of their father, or for some other reason, are likely to be committed to state institutions. Thus Mr. Gillespie states that a Catholic organization discovered twenty-four children in one institution, seventeen of whom were Catholics who were about to be spirited away by a non-Catholic proselyter. In the same diocese a partial census showed 300 Catholic babies in the hands of state institutions or non-Catholic associations. As the writer suggests, careful investigation should be made into public poorhouses and non-Catholic homes for children or charitable agencies.

Time was when in Boston alone seventy-five per cent of the children committed to public institutions were Catholics. This condition was completely changed when a number of "visitors" gave their attention to saving these boys from becoming wards of the state. Partly from relatives of their families and partly from Catholic societies the necessary funds were obtained.

Here, too, should be mentioned the organizations providing a lasting home for delinquent children. To the work of the Good Shepherd nuns corresponds in its own way the excellent work accomplished by these institutions, and both are a labor of love most dear to the Heart of Christ. It is impossible to dwell upon them as they deserve, and they can only be recommended here to the hearty support of the faithful.

For all engaged in these tasks there is consolation and joy in the thought of the rejoicing that is caused among the angels of heaven over even a single sinner doing penance, while they are helping so many to return to the arms of God or to keep them in His love. What greater delight than to bring to the Good Shepherd the sheep that was lost; to restore to the Father the prodigal who had perhaps wandered afar; to preserve for God the hearts of those little ones whose first faults, however slight, might have led to serious consequences.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Making Proper Provisions for the Young

Our duties toward the Catholic youth of our parishes and cities are twofold. In the first place we must save and preserve those who have already fallen, or who have at all events come under the iron hand of the law. Their first offense must not be permitted to become the beginning of a career of irreligiousness and perhaps of criminality. In the second place we must prevent even these first offenses by providing whatever is necessary to keep our boys and girls, our young men and maidens out of the way of danger and of sin. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Above all we must prevent the loss of faith in the hundreds of thousands of our young people everywhere exposed to the lure of the world.

Protestants have given us an example in the Y. M. C. A. of what can be accomplished on a

grand scale for the young. They have in the past absorbed great numbers of our Catholic boys. The Y. W. C. A. has, in the same way, proved an attraction for the girls of the city. The time has come when we ourselves may rightly think of meeting the necessity of our day by the establishment of great Catholic social centers or institutions.

However this may be, let us not fail to support with our strength and means the existing enterprises and to launch still other needed undertakings in the name of Christ and of the Church.

Our children who have finished their parochial schools cannot be left to complete their education in the university of the street, the bar-room or the low resorts of pleasure and amusement; neither can they be left to the Protestantizing or at least decatholicizing influence of the Y. M. C. A.

Noble efforts are being made by Catholic men and women to provide for what is so imperatively needed for the Catholic youth of our cities. Their efforts must be sustained by every one and furthered to the utmost of our possibilities.

An enumeration and description of all these manifold enterprises cannot be thought of here. Catholics should of their own accord seek to

acquaint themselves with what is being done in their own parish and their own city. The services of all are needed to promote this great cause.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has reached out not merely to provide for needy families, but likewise to help in the preservation of the young. Perhaps the most remarkable developments here have been the Ozanam Clubs for boys, of which a number have already been founded in New York, where young men devote their leisure to providing athletics and amusements as well as religious instruction and inspiration to the children of the street.

"The unselfish, virile, strenuous work of our Catholic young men," said the late Mr. Thomas M. Mulry, "must bring forth results, grand and far-reaching in their influence, for the future of Holy Church." If our Catholic colleges and universities do not promote such movements on the part of their alumni, he added, it is high time that they should change their curriculum.

But this is only one of the many efforts actually made by Catholic organizations and Catholic enterprise. Successful attempts have been made on many sides to provide large and suitable buildings for the young in which all modern facilities are offered them for recre-

ation and likewise for education, while their spiritual welfare is of course never lost to sight.

The idea of commodious and extensive homes for dependent boys in general, news boys, working boys and homeless boys of every description, has been eagerly seized and carried into effect. So the helpless are sheltered free of cost, or rooms and board are furnished industrious boys at the lowest price, together with clean entertainment and recreation.

Houses of a similar nature have been founded for poor working girls, where they can live safe from temptation and danger. The fact that Catholic women give their time and energy gratis to this work, and that the girls themselves are taught to see largely to their own private needs, makes the existence of such homes easily possible and reduces expenses to a minimum.

In all these cases Catholic instruction and inspiration are provided as well as healthy amusement and useful education.

Similarly effective in another way are the Catholic evening schools, such as the Young Men's Catholic Association Evening Classes of Boston, which even now have an attendance of 2,500 pupils, boys and young men, who are following courses on the greatest variety of subjects. Thus the influence of the Y. M. C.

A. is counteracted and an intelligent Catholic laity is being educated that will in future be a credit to the Church and a strong defense of the Catholic Faith.

What shall we say of the splendid work of our Catholic settlement houses with their sewing circles and classes for girls, as well as their labor for the little foreign lads and the urchins of the streets? It would be hopeless to attempt to enter here upon an account of their wide usefulness or to give a worthy estimate of their value to the Church and State.

There are special possibilities likewise in the Catholic Boy Scouts' movement, which will appeal strongly to many, and in a thousand other different enterprises which all earnestly recommend themselves to our attention, from the summer outings for those at least among the children of our poor who most stand in need of them, to the Catechism classes and Catechism Centers for Catholic children who would in no other way receive an adequate Catholic instruction. Noble work is being accomplished in this regard by public school teachers out of the hours of their regular work and by college and university students, as well as by many other self-sacrificing young men and women who desire to make themselves truly useful in the vineyard of the Lord.

In all such efforts the Sodality Union can be highly serviceable. Sodalists can surely not neglect to interest themselves in work of this kind and Sodality Directors will not fail to call attention to it.

But Catholic organizations of every kind must seek out for themselves opportunities for strictly Catholic social work. Societies, no more than individuals, should be commercial and selfish and mean-spirited enough to answer the ardent appeal of our Divine Lord for souls, and especially for the souls of the young, by the unworthy reply that they are not their brothers' keepers.

The noble words of the great Vincentian whose name already occurs in this article, should be impressed upon the souls of young and old:

"To those who have reached the period of life when arduous physical effort is practically impossible, I would say: 'Give from your store of savings and help, by financial contributions, those of your younger fellowmen who are interested in making manly men and saving citizens for the community.' To the younger generation I would appeal in a different strain: 'Those of you who have been blessed with health and intelligence, give freely of your time.' "

CHAPTER XLIV

MIXED MARRIAGES

Obstacles to Spreading God's Kingdom

One of the greatest obstacles in the way of spreading the kingdom of Christ are mixed marriages. Taken in its widest sense and in its popular use the term signifies all marriages concluded between Catholics and non-Catholics. Technically understood it refers only to the marriage of a Catholic with a person baptized in some Christian sect. It is employed here in its most general meaning. For greater simplicity we shall throughout imagine the prospective husband to be outside the fold and the woman whom he courts to be a Catholic. The supposition might of course be as readily reversed.

The insistence of Catholics that under such circumstances the conversion of the non-Catholic party should precede the marriage cannot reasonably be offensive to Protestants. Their doctrine of the private interpretation of the Bible must leave full freedom to any one to

enter the Catholic Church, if he is convinced that this is the only Church established by Christ and that the Scriptures plainly and unmistakably teach him so. The Catholic Church itself would not consider his admission into the fold unless he were sincerely convinced that it alone is the one and only Church of Christ. The mere desire of satisfying the wish of the Catholic party would in nowise suffice.

But might not the Protestant similarly insist that the Catholic should embrace the Protestant creed?

Certainly not, if he acts consistently with his own principles. Every one, in the Protestant view, has the liberty of interpreting the Scriptures as may seem best to him. The Catholic lady in the case is convinced of the absolute correctness of her own interpretation. A Protestant can therefore have no objection that she should freely follow it. She accepts, for the most satisfactory reasons, the interpretation of the Scriptures authoritatively given by the Church, the divinely appointed interpreter of the Word of God. It is the Church built by Christ upon Peter, having the promise of the perpetual assistance of her Founder and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, together with the positive assurance that it can never err, for the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

What reason, then, could there be for him to demand of her a change of religion? Her interpretation of the Scriptures is final, it is reasonable, it fully satisfies her heart and intellect. Why should he seek to alter it? His own interpretation is not so. It can and must constantly change with each new view. It will be settled and unchangeable only when he too has accepted the authoritative interpretation of the Church, to which alone the Scriptures have been committed that their meaning might not be made to change with every wind of doctrine, and men might not wrest them, as St. Peter warns, to their own perdition.

The position of the Church is unassailable. Yet a common ground of religious unity is the first need of married life. For the Catholic, the authority of the divinely constituted Church is final. It is the voice of God. The Protestant has hitherto had no such guidance. The doctrine of the Church is therefore proposed to him. He is under no compulsion. Should he declare that he cannot conscientiously embrace the Faith, with full conviction of its absolute truth—the only condition upon which he could be admitted into the fold—then the Catholic party in turn should declare that she can not conscientiously marry him. And here, happily for her, the difficulty ends.

But should she nevertheless continue to encourage his advances and be blindly willing to embrace the hazard, not merely of her own temporal happiness, but likewise of her faith and the faith of her children, the Church may yield for weighty reasons, though not because of her mere petition. Knowing from centuries of sad experience how grave the dangers of such unions are, she will permit them only because of grave necessity, to avoid, possibly, the certainty of even greater dangers and evils.

When a dispensation is issued, three conditions are required by the Church. The Catholic party must be allowed the free exercise of religion. The offspring must be brought up Catholics. And, finally, the Catholic party must promise to try to enable the other to see the truth of the Catholic faith. To enter upon such a union without at least the reasonable hope of a conversion would be sheer rashness.

There have been instances in which all these conditions were fulfilled after marriage in the true spirit of the Church. But such is not the rule. No greater obstacle, perhaps, has been put in the way of the progress of the Church than mixed marriages. The number of souls lost to her through them is incalculable. Unless conversion of the non-Catholic really follows, coldness and indifference in religious

matters is the most natural result. It seems almost a miracle of grace that the children should be fervent Catholics when the parents themselves are divided in their religious allegiance, even should no worse evils threaten.

If, therefore, we are sincere in our desire to promote God's kingdom upon earth, we must do all in our power to set aside this danger to the faith of Catholics. The Church from her very beginning has been opposed to such unions, and she has never changed her attitude. Reason itself tells us that there should be the most intimate union between husband and wife, and this is impossible where there is divergence of opinion regarding the most vital, profound, sacred and necessary truths upon which the whole conduct of life must depend and about which must twine all its greatest hopes and dearest sentiments and most cherished aspirations.

And what of the peril for the souls of the poor little ones, and the scandal that is likely to be given them! What indeed of the responsibility for their immortal souls! Who will lightly take this upon his conscience? Catholics cannot too earnestly avoid and preach against the evil of mixed marriages.

CHAPTER XLV

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Retreats for the Laity and Their Result

AMONG the beautiful legends of the Middle Ages, so often full of profoundest spiritual meaning, is one that tells of a fountain of perpetual youth. Its waters are fancied to well up in some distant fortunate island, to which popular imagination had given the name of Bimini. The special virtue of this wonderful spring consists not merely in healing all manners of diseases, but even in restoring youth itself to those who quaff of its sparkling water.

The story runs that Ponce de Leon, the famous discoverer of Florida, sailed forth to find this marvelous island and its more marvelous spring. De Soto, too, and other Spanish explorers are said to have sought for it, but no one ever found it.

It is hardly to be credited that these bold sea-rovers and searchers after new worlds beyond the trackless oceans seriously believed in such a fountain of perpetual youth. Yet some

may have romantically indulged the pleasant fantasy. The real object for which Ponce de Leon is claimed to have equipped three vessels and sailed forth on March 3, 1513, was to investigate the truth of what the Indians reported of an island in which a spring with wonderful curative properties was said to be found.

But the fountain of youth exists. The mistake was only to have taken it too literally. There were fountains of youth a-plenty to be found within the Church of God for those who had eyes to see them.

There is one fortunate isle in particular of which I wish to speak. Its fountain of youth lies open to the laity in our day. They need not seek long nor far to find it, and it will abundantly repay their quest. They will here meet with no disappointment, however romantic their anticipations may be. To be perfectly plain and literal, I refer to the splendid and effective institution of our modern laymen's and women's retreats, where they may renew their youth and replenish their strength in the service of God.

What, then, is a retreat?

Let us first understand what it is not. It is not merely a time of prayer. It is not merely a period of instruction. It is not a mission. It is something more than all this.

The retreat, from an external point of view, is a period during which a person withdraws entirely from the occupations of his ordinary business or employment, leaves his home and wonted surroundings for a few short days, and in retirement and silence forgets the world and its distractions, in order to meditate upon the eternal truths and apply them to his soul. A director is present to guide him and to give him instructions and meditations according to a carefully prepared plan.

There is a twofold purpose in the retreat. The first is to correct, with God's grace, whatever is wrong or inordinate in our lives. The second is, with the same grace, rightly to order these lives for the future according to the Divine Will in our regard.

We may thus, therefore, define the retreat: It is an exercise of the soul, by which, in the presence of God, a man meditates, in silence and retirement, upon the eternal truths, and by the light of them examines his life, giving to it that right direction which shall be most agreeable to God and most useful for his own salvation.

Retreats for workingmen had long been a special feature in Europe before the great war broke out, and the Church most highly encouraged them. But there is need of retreats

for all classes and for women as well as men. To all the opportunity is offered. Abundant reference is usually made in the Catholic press to such retreats given during the summer months, where lodging and board are provided and a spiritual director presides.

Here, in these sacred homes of thought and prayer and high resolve, men of all walks of life meet upon a common ground, taking their meals in silence at the same tables and listening to the same searching and inspiring words of instruction. Yet each one meditates upon his own personal renewal of life, upon the design that God has in view for his own individual soul. The clamor of the world can not distract him, for it does not penetrate here. With his past rectified and his soul filled with noble resolutions he at last goes forth again into the world, a new man. He has quaffed of the fountain of youth. He has dwelled on the blessed isle. His vision is renewed and he sees life as it is in truth. He is strengthened with the Bread of the strong, and prepared as never before to engage in the work of God.

Is it to be marveled at, then, that from these retreats should go forth our lay apostles, our leaders in the work for humanity, our zealous promoters of the cause of the Church in all times and places?

But this fountain of youth, to retain its effects upon our lives, must be often approached. Those who have once made the retreat need hardly be reminded of this fact, for we find them returning of their own accord with each succeeding year to renew the vigor of their spiritual youth, impaired by their struggle in the busy life of a pagan world.

The fountain of youth is no fable, we need not seek it in islands afar across the ocean. We all may quaff of its waters and feel its effects in the renewal of our lives according to the Heart of Christ.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE DIVINE SOURCE OF ENERGY

Frequent Communion of the Laity. The Decree

HAVE you watched the great wheels turning in some vast factory, the pistons moving to and fro? Have you noticed the strong iron rods and the delicate appliances of the marvelous mechanisms performing their work, speeding like the restless arms and pliant fingers of a chained giant laboring at his task from morning until night? Have you reckoned the results in the heaped-up stores of wares or in the hundreds of thousands of printed sheets that were to bring into as many homes the idle scandals of the day or perhaps the Gospel of the Lord?

Have you thought, as you stood and wondered, of the power which set to work all these wheels and pistons, all these arms of iron and subtle fingers of delicately fashioned steel? It was the motor driven by the energy developed through the furnace heat.

Far more wonderful than all this artificial mechanism is man, the workmanship of God, with his thoughts that wander through eternity, his marvelous memory, his power of will, his physical equipment of tendons and muscles and nerves and all his exquisitely-made senses, the least of which surpasses beyond all comparison the most skillfully wrought invention of human minds. Yet what are the mechanisms of man themselves but only the result of the faculties given him by God?

Man's lower nature is to be ruled and governed and guided by the higher; the energies of his body are to be directed by the soul. But perfectly to accomplish the purpose for which he was created by an infinitely wise Maker, his heart must constantly be inflamed by the fire of divine love. Here is the furnace heat that must drive the motor of the human will in order that soul and body may labor together to produce the works of God, the works for His glory and our own salvation, and the salvation of countless other souls, for all eternity.

But what is to keep alive this fire of love in the human heart? Upon the answer to this question everything depends. Fortunately for us our Divine Lord Himself answered it when He said that unless we eat His flesh and

drink His blood we shall not have life in us. We are constantly to receive Him, flesh and blood, soul and divinity, in the Holy Eucharist.

Evidently it is necessary that the furnace be fired continually if the motor is properly to perform its action and the machinery is perfectly to accomplish its intended work for which it was designed.

We know for what work we have been planned by Almighty God, and we know too that we cannot permit the fire of love to lessen in our hearts, and perhaps to be extinguished entirely, as would be the case in the state of mortal sin, when all supernatural works that bring us merit for eternal life have completely ceased. Though the Church commands no more than annual communion under penalty of mortal sin, yet she would have us constantly renew that fire of love by frequent or even daily communion. Thus we can best prevent its flames from falling or ever being extinguished through grievous sin.

"The holy Synod," was the decision of the Council of Trent, "would desire that at every Mass the faithful who are present should communicate not only spiritually, by way of internal affection, but sacramentally by the actual reception of the Eucharist."

Spiritual communion should be a common practice of every Catholic, but we should likewise receive Our Savior sacramentally at every Mass at which we assist, if we would fully answer the appeal of Holy Church. This wish of the Council, as Pope Pius X said, is entirely in conformity with the desire that inflamed the Sacred Heart of Christ when He instituted His sacrament of love. It is truly to be, as far as possible, "our daily bread."

Here, therefore, is the most important condition of the lay apostolate. The Holy Table should be approached with the utmost frequency possible. No vain or idle fear is to deter us, since nothing is required except freedom from mortal sin and a right intention. When these conditions are reasonably judged to be present no one can keep us from receiving Holy Communion every day. Yet who can not readily enough possess them always?

To understand clearly the meaning of the two conditions mentioned here it may be well to read once more the explanation of the Sacred Congregation of the Council:

"A right intention consists in this: that he who approaches the Holy Table should do so, not out of routine, or vain-glory, or human respect, but for the purpose of pleasing God, of being more closely united with Him by

charity, and of seeking this divine remedy for his weaknesses and defects.

"Although it is more excellent that those who communicate frequently or daily should be free from venial sin, especially from such as are fully deliberate, and from all affection thereto, nevertheless it is sufficient that they be free from mortal sin, with the purpose of never sinning mortally in future; and, if they have this sincere purpose, it is impossible but that daily communion should gradually emancipate them from even venial sins, and from all affection thereto."

To drive away the last remnants of Jansenism which, through a false idea of reverence towards this sacrament has kept so many souls from the frequent reception of it, the Holy See made clear for all time that daily communion is primarily a remedy and not a reward. Again, it is well to quote here the exact words of the Papal Decree:

"Moreover the desire of Jesus Christ and of the Church, that all the faithful should daily approach the Sacred Banquet, is directed chiefly to this end, that the faithful, being united to God by means of the sacrament, may thence derive strength to resist their sensual passions, to cleanse themselves from the stains of daily faults, and to avoid those graver sins

to which human frailty is liable; so that its primary purpose is not that the honor and reverence due to Our Lord may be safeguarded, or that the sacrament may serve as a reward of virtue bestowed on the recipient."

Doubtless the greatest care should nevertheless be taken with our preparation and thanksgiving, in order that the greatest possible profit may be drawn from holy communion. It is certainly not laudable for the recipient to leave the Church immediately at the close of Holy Mass, where this can be avoided. An extra quarter of an hour can then be well spent in converse with Our Divine Lord, in thanksgiving and in obtaining favors from Him for ourselves and the souls of others. Yet we must not confuse this advice with the necessary conditions of daily communion. We should not abstain from holy communion because time is wanting for a long preparation or thanksgiving.

To carry on our apostolate for the kingdom of God with the greatest fruit for souls, as well as to heap up boundless treasures of divine grace for ourselves, we should therefore communicate as often as possible, fulfilling the necessary conditions. And in the second place we should communicate as fervently as possible, according to all the wishes of the

Sacred Heart. So will His divine love energize our lives to the highest point of spiritual efficiency. So can we hope to become true apostles in the sublime service of Christ and of His Church.

CHAPTER XLVII

PARENTS AND FREQUENT COMMUNION OF CHILDREN

Decree on Early and Frequent Communion of Children

"How," we might once have asked, "are we to surmount the indifference, the irreverence, the doubt and denial which the agnostic surroundings of our Catholic population are so likely to beget?" This is no longer a problem for us. The Holy Spirit Himself has clearly taught us the answer. It is most evidently contained in those great, providential decrees on Frequent and Early Communion. Should we fail to avail ourselves of these even to the utmost, the negligence indeed were folly; but disobedience by setting them aside were worse than folly. Our greatest hope is in the Sacred Heart which beats within the Eucharist.

The arm of God is not shortened and the wonders of the Eucharist in the Church of the early centuries shall repeat themselves to-day.

The same power that conquered the paganism of old can triumph over the godlessness of the modern world. What was the source of strength to the early Christian in days like our own if not the Holy Eucharist, received by the faithful at every Mass and borne in napkins of immaculate white to the prison cell? Thus was the flame of living fire kindled in the breast of the believer, and spreading outward and onward under the breath of the Holy Spirit, the Pentecostal storm, it at last enwrapped the earth in a conflagration of Divine Love.

These decrees, therefore, are not hasty conclusions and arbitrary laws. They have been given only "after mature deliberations." There is the divine foreknowledge of God directing us through them. It is only at our peril that we can afford to ignore them.

Our duty in regard to the early first communion of our children has been made clear beyond the shadow of a doubt. "The age of discretion, alike for confession and for holy communion," says the Decree *Quam Singulari,* "is the age at which the child *begins* to use its reason, that is, *about the seventh year,* or later or even sooner." We are not therefore to wait until the full use of reason is acquired, for the decree expressly states: "The

incipient use is enough, that is, a certain use of reason."

From this time "begins the obligation of satisfying the twofold precept of confession and communion." Nor may this obligation be taken lightly by the father, or whoever holds his place, any more than by the confessor of the child. Moreover, the only catechetical knowledge which the decree requires for the child is "that whereby it understands, according to its capacity, the mysteries of faith necessary as the means of salvation, and distinguishes the Eucharistic Bread from a common and material bread, so as to approach the Holy Eucharist with *such devotion as befits its age.*" Nothing can be more plain. It is the children's charter, whose rules must be strictly observed, and it is a joy indeed for us to observe them to the letter.

Let our children then come at the earliest age; give them the benefit of every doubt; let them continue daily, if possible; certainly let each day find great numbers at the Sacred Table. Several times a week they can go, and, thanks be to God, many are doing so in our parishes.

May parents as well as teachers and priests ever bear in mind the words of the Papal Decree: "Those who have charge of children

must take the utmost care that after the first communion the said children should approach the Holy Table very often and, if possible, even daily." By the previous decree it was made a point of duty for every priest, "frequently and with great zeal" to exhort all the faithful, old and young, to this practice. Catholic parents should do all in their power to assist in this work.

Thus to the rationalism and materialism about us we shall oppose the purely spiritual and invisible armor of the Eucharistic God. To the socialistic destruction of authority and promotion of class-hatred we shall present the invincible charity of Christ, the Judge and Saviour of the world. To the vaunting pride and triumphant march of the hosts that are poured forth against us from the gates of hell we shall show, like the saints of old, the Sacred Host, displayed upon the walls of our citadel.

"I am aware," wrote the great Cardinal Fischer, "that, outside perhaps of certain religious schools, all children can not be trained to daily communion in the *literal* sense of the term. But let us do what we can in this direction, under the care of zealous priests. If we can not make our children approach the Holy Table every day, let them communicate sev-

eral times a week, or at least, so far as may be, every Sunday and holy-day."

The duty laid upon parents by the Holy Father regarding the early and frequent communion of their children is strongly to be insisted upon. We all know what losses the Church in America has already sustained. Her progress during the last half century has been like the march of a vast caravansary, where the sands are white with the bleaching bones of those who have fallen by the way. Early and frequent communion alone, with that devotion to Our Lady, always so tenderly entwined with it, can assuredly save the home and the child.

Children so nurtured upon the Bread of the strong and the Wine that bringeth forth virgins will never rise up against their priests and their bishops. They will never be numbered among the anti-clerical bigots of their age. They will never join in the socialist hue and cry for the destruction of the Catholic school, which is the great bulwark of the Church in our times. He who molds the character of the child makes the history of the future. No more powerful means is given to the Catholic teacher or priest in the Catholic school for the formation of child-character than the Holy Eucharist.

There is a picture I have seen which appeared in one of the most virulent socialist sheets that was ever issued from any press. It showed the army of the children of the poor, with a background of scaffolding and belching furnaces against the distant sky. On, on, they marched, with bodies bent in the speed of their irresistible advance—poor, starved little bodies, in tatters and in rags, with unkempt hair and wistful eyes and shouting lips. On, on they marched, not knowing what it meant, here and there a worker in their midst, grim and resolute, while in the van there walked a mother, wan and haggard, gazing with despairing look upon the infant at her breast. Onward, onward was the rush of all, full of menace and revenge. And the legend read: "The future is the children's heritage."

Are we less interested in Christ's own little ones? Between the ages of six and eleven lies the period which will probably determine the formation of their character. With such Eucharistic habits as we can then instill, with such a conformation to the life of Christ as holy communion can divinely effect in them, there is no danger that the foundation of their religious education has not been solidly laid.

Great movements have already taken their inception. The march must begin with the

children, as it has well been pictured. Shall its way be over our schools, our churches, our parishes; or shall we ourselves direct it for the glory of God in the cause of Christ and of His Church? I do not for one moment hesitate to say that the answer must depend under divine Providence, upon the effect we give to the decree of the Church on Early and Frequent Communion.

CHAPTER XLVIII

PARENTS AND VOCATIONS

How Parents Can Aid in Their Children's Vocation

THE harvest fields stand white. The grain waves endless to the gray horizon's rim. Why are the reapers so few?

God alone can give a vocation, but Catholic parents can mightily co-operate with Him in preparing the souls of their children for this great gift. There is no more sublime task than to pray and labor for the salvation of souls, to be co-workers with God in accomplishing the great purpose for which He Himself came down to earth.

A deep sense of the inestimable honor and blessing implied for parents in the divine vocation of their children is a hallmark of true Catholicity.

If the sordid commercialism of our age has corroded with its rust the hearts of Catholic parents, if the vulgar craving after social recognition in the eyes of a godless world has

quenched the Catholic spirit within them, it is highly important that we seek with all our strength to renew it. Above all, we must spare no efforts to infuse into the mind of the rising generation a due appreciation of the meaning of a divine vocation.

Vocations, it is true, may imply hardships for parents. They may bring with them trials which the worldly-minded will fail to understand in their true significance. The cross of Christ will ever be to them a sign of folly, as their own wisdom will in the judgment of God be the folly of follies in the light of eternal truth.

To be the parents of priests and Religious, to offer up to the Lord consecrated sons and daughters, is something almost priestly in itself, something almost sacramental. It is a great privilege to have their children accepted to stand before their King forever to serve Him in His courts. A great honor indeed and a blessing beyond compare! It implies on God's part the bestowal of special graces upon parents which are likest those of a divinely consecrated state of life. But most Christly of all is the joy they may rightly have in the souls that by God's grace shall be sanctified and saved through the children they have given to the Lord.

Vocations involve sacrifice, but a sacrifice that is gladly brought by the truly Catholic parent, and blessed by God a hundredfold.

Souls there seem to be whom the Lord has not led into the way of the religious life in order that they might instead labor with Him in raising up sons and daughters who shall in their turn dedicate themselves to Him by the most solemn ties. Such was apparently the manifest will of God regarding the parents of the "Little Flower of Jesus," who before their betrothal had both sought in vain for admission into the religious life. Monastery and convent were closed to them, but another great blessing was instead bestowed by the bountiful hands of their Divine Master, whose wish was their only will. Their ardent desire and prayer, in Holy Matrimony, was only that the Lord might give to them many children who should all be consecrated entirely to Him. Their petition was gloriously answered.

Yet though we may well ask from God this great favor for our children, if it be His holy will, we are not to force their choice. Our labor is to prepare the soil and to help in fostering the seeds of His graces, to set for our children an example of every Christian virtue, to lead them gently along with us up to those heights of sanctity which by His help we can

attain, to preserve them carefully from all noxious worldly influences and the taint of a godless press and school, to place in their hand the literature they should read and to study it ourselves by their side, to watch over their companionship and amusements and over every unfolding of their souls with the delicate care of the gardener entrusted with the rearing of a priceless plant. So may we hope that in the garden of our own homes those roses and lilies may grow which in time shall find a chosen place close to the altar of the Lord.

What though our sacrifice may bring with it some bitterness and crosses, and we may be brought to taste a drop of that chalice which Mary drank in the offering she made of her Divine Son! All the wealth that lies hidden in earth's veins of gold cannot purchase an hour of that inner peace and joy which comes with the sacrifice joyfully made for the love of God. And who can comprehend the delight of the eternal reunion with our beloved in the bosom of the Father!

By giving their children to God parents will find that they have only bound them more closely and eternally to themselves, as in God's mercy they may confidently and joyously hope. Not to wife and husband do their sons

and daughters cleave when they leave them, but to God, and in Him to them likewise with a spiritual affection that is deeper than mere nature and more lasting than flesh and blood.

May parents then give to their children all the opportunities that can aid to foster a divine vocation in their souls. If the children conscientiously follow other callings the parents' prayer and labor will not for that reason have been in vain. Their sons and daughters will be only the better prepared to become thereafter a credit to them and to their Church, laymen and women such as we need to fight the battles of God in the world.

CHAPTER XLIX

ENTHRONEMENT OF THE SACRED HEART IN THE HOME

Consecrating the Family to the Sacred Heart

"MY DESIRE is to reign through My Heart," Our Divine Lord said to Blessed Margaret Mary. "I shall bestow abundant graces on the houses where the image of My Sacred Heart is exposed and specially honored."

These words are the foundation of a practice whose object is the solemn consecration of the entire family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, made before an image of that Divine Heart displayed in the home. It is a practice which should profoundly appeal to the laity and there should be no Catholic family which has not been dedicated to that Divine Source of love and blessings.

"For the Christians living in the world," wrote Blessed Margaret Mary, "my Sovereign Master assured me that they would find in

the devotion to the Sacred Heart all the help necessary for their state of life, peace in their families, and consolation in their miseries.

"That adorable Heart has likewise pledged itself by means of this devotion to reunite families that have been divided and to bring about peace among them, to protect those who shall be in any necessity, and to turn aside the punishments of the just wrath of God in restoring them to His grace should they by sin have fallen from it.

"Finally it is properly within the Divine Heart Itself that these Christians shall find a place of refuge during life and especially at the hour of death."

These promises are translated from the authentic text of the revelations made to the great servant of the Sacred Heart. The particular practice of which we here speak consists not merely in exposing the image of the Sacred Heart for veneration in the home, but likewise in consecrating to this adorable Heart of Jesus the entire family, its members present and absent, living and dead. Could there be anything more beautiful or more certain to draw down God's blessings and graces upon all who are dear and near to us?

We have here at the same time a most acceptable means of showing our affection to our

God and Saviour by offering Him reparation for the infidelities of families and nations that reject and spurn His love. This motive is one that particularly endears us to Our Lord, for devotion to His Divine Heart aims at giving Him a true return of love in order to make amends for the coldness and indifference of countless souls toward Him, especially in His Blessed Sacrament.

For this latter reason a fervent communion by every member of the family should, so far as possible, take place on the day of consecration. And nothing can be more fruitful than a repetition of this family communion of the day chosen for the monthly renewal of this act before the picture of the Sacred Heart. Where it can be done the first Friday of each month will naturally be set aside for the renewal. How can that day of blessings be better opened than by a family communion, and how can it be better closed than by a repetition of the act of consecration in the family circle?

The devotion is merely a practical application of the wish of Our Divine Saviour. It has the approbation of the Sovereign Pontiffs and of many cardinals, archbishops, and bishops throughout the world. It has wrought wonders of conversion in Catholic homes. It

has the pledge of abundant graces and of all the favors of the Sacred Heart which are enumerated in the authentic revelations cited above. It is clearly inspired by the Spirit of God and is most profoundly needed at the present time when the desecration of the home is the crying evil of our day.

To induce others to practice it and to aid poor families by securing for them an inviting picture of this Heart of all love, is a true work of the apostolate of love. What better advice can we give to those who repeat to us the story of their domestic quarrels of unhappiness than to ask them to consecrate their families to the Sacred Heart of the Prince of Peace and to renew this consecration frequently, that it may become a living factor in their daily existence?

The picture selected by us should be exposed in the room where all the members of the family usually meet, that it may always be conspicuously in their sight. Thus laying aside human respect they will openly acknowledge Christ as the King of their home. Under His eyes the little ones will grow up into a noble manhood and womanhood, for His image will constantly serve to keep them in mind of His love and to model their lives upon His. Before it all the great family events will transpire, its joys and its sorrows, and Christ will

ever be in their midst where parents and children are united in His name.

The head of each family, the father, or, in his absence, the mother, or the oldest of the children, or whoever may hold the place of authority, should take the initiative in bringing about this consecration. So likewise schools, colleges, asylums, labor associations, convents and institutions of every kind may wisely adopt this practice.

Though the ceremony, according to the customary method, is for the first time performed by the priest in the presence of the entire family, and a ceremonial has even been prepared for the purpose, yet often this can not readily be done and no "secretaryships" may exist to promote the practice. There is then no reason why the head of the family, or whoever holds his place, should not perform the act of consecration while the members of the family unite themselves with him. Let some one at all events recite this consecration and let frequent renewals help to make it living and effective.

Solemnity can be given to the ceremony by placing flowers and lights about the image of the Sacred Heart, and it is well that the picture of Mary's Immaculate Heart and of St. Joseph should not be wanting to complete the

religious beauty of that family room. There the angel guardians will rejoice to enter and to dwell. It will be a Christian sanctuary, an oasis of love and purity and joy in the midst of a darksome world. It will above all rejoice the Heart of Christ and give Him reparation for the love that elsewhere is denied Him. He is not to be outdone in generosity.

What greater joy for Christian mothers than frequently to repeat this act and to know that their dear ones are safely hidden and protected in the Heart of Jesus, there to live and there to die?

The following is the act itself, omitting all the ceremonies. Mere words alone do not, of course, suffice; the family should henceforth strive to live in the spirit of this consecration:

ACT OF CONSECRATION

Lord Jesus, vouchsafe to visit this home, in the company of Thy sweet Mother, and confer on its inhabitants the graces promised to families especially consecrated to Thy Divine Heart. Thou Thyself, O Saviour of the world, didst solicit, with merciful purposes, the solemn homage of universal love toward the Heart which has so loved men and by whom such ungrateful returns are made to Thee, as

Thou hast revealed to Thy servant Margaret Mary. Therefore this family hastens to Thy call, and in reparation for the apostasy of so many souls by whom Thou art forsaken, proclaims Thee, O Sacred Heart, their amiable Sovereign and consecrates to Thee absolutely their joys, their troubles, and their sadness, the present and the future of this their Home, which is to be henceforth and forever Thine. Bless, then, sweet Jesus, those present and absent, and bless those who, by the will of Heaven, have been snatched away by death. We beseech Thee, O Loving Heart, through the love of the Virgin Mary, that Thou wouldst establish in this house of Thine the empire of Thy charity; inspire all its inhabitants with Thy spirit of faith, of sanctity and of purity; and win their souls for Thee, leading them away from the world and its foolish vanities. Open, O Lord, the radiant wound of Thy merciful Heart, and keep therein, as in the ark of salvation, all those who belong to Thee for all eternity. May the conquering Heart of Jesus be always loved, blessed, and glorified amongst us. Amen.

CHAPTER L

THROUGH MARY

Bringing Jesus Anew to the World Through Mary

THROUGH Mary Christ first came into this world. Through her He must be given to the world again in our time.

Catholics have no exaggerated devotion to Mary. They know full well that in herself she is only a pure creature of God, who owes to Him her dignity and excellence; but they know, too, the great things which He that is mighty has done to her and the power which He has given her at His Throne.

Mary is the Mother of God, and when this is said, all is said.

Deny to her this title and in the same breath you deny all Christianity. Christ is the true Son of Mary, and if Mary is not the Mother of God then Christ is not God and the religion which He founded is the basest of all deceptions.

It was in answer to Simon Peter's solemn

profession of faith in the divinity of Christ, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that Christ declared him blessed, because the Father who is in heaven had revealed this to him.

Christ is true God of true God, and Mary is therefore true Mother of the true God. What honor, short of that which belongs to Divinity alone, may not therefore rightly be bestowed upon her for the sake of that Divine Son, whose Mother she truly is; for the sake of the Holy Spirit, whose virginal Spouse she was chosen to be; for the sake of the Eternal Father, whose dearest daughter she was from the moment of her Immaculate Conception?

But Mary's place in the divine plan of God's providence is not merely one of honor, but likewise a position of power corresponding to her dignity. She is the Queen Mother at the right hand of the King for all eternity. What petition can He refuse her who seeks in all things only for His greater glory?

Catholics, it is true, know well how to discriminate between the power of Mary, which is not derived from herself, and the power of God. Hers is an intercessory influence, purely human, yet able, in virtue of her motherhood, to sway the Heart of Christ as no other created power can.

What name so potent as the name of Mother? What then must be the power hidden for Mary in that title which the highest seraphim can not utter without deepest reverence: "Mother of God"? It is no exaggeration to say that God alone can comprehend in all its fullness the meaning of that great name which it is given to no one else to bear than to the little, humble Mary, the handmaid of the Lord.

What therefore can be more evident than the need of leaguing with our weakness her own mighty power before God that we may bring about through her the conversion of the world?

The Heart of Mary is an apostolic heart, as she herself is the Queen of the apostles. It is from this stainless Heart that the Blood of Christ was drawn. It is by this that He was offered up to the Eternal Father, a sacrifice for the redemption of mankind. It was into this that the Holy Spirit descended and which He inflamed with zeal for the salvation of the world. It was this which was given to be the joy of the disciples and the precious treasure of the early Church. It was to the mother love of the Heart of Mary that we ourselves were committed beneath the Cross of Christ,

and to this we were directed to go in our needs: "Behold thy mother."

The first hope of fallen man was the Woman with her Child, and the last hope of the world shall still be the same: Jesus through Mary.

When laboring for souls we should turn to her for help and guidance, the Queen of the Apostles, the Mother of Christ and our Mother. We should ceaselessly invoke her mighty intercession for the conversion and salvation of mankind. Through her we must bring Christ once more into the minds and hearts of men, as through her the Eternal Word was first made flesh and dwelled among us.

Through the Heart of Mary may the world be brought to the Heart of Jesus!

Nor are we, in conclusion, to forget the first of all lay apostles whose life was spent in the service of Christ and Mary, the great foster-father of the Word Incarnate. He it was who provided for the Child and His Mother, who fearlessly guarded for us the Bread of Life, and who brought afar to the Gentile world the Redeemer of mankind. To him the Catholic laity will look for their model after Jesus and Mary, to him they will lift their eyes for guidance and help: to Joseph, the

humble scion of a kingly line, the pure of heart and brave of deed, the soul proved faithful unto death; Joseph the Protector of Christ's flock, the Foster Father of all true children of Mary, the Patron of the universal Church, the perfect ideal of the Catholic lay apostle as well as of the holy priesthood, he who was privileged to hold in his hand and fold to his heart the Word made flesh.

THE END

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